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SEX EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN CHASTITY

By

THE REV. FELIX M. KIRSCH, O.M.CAP., PH.D., LITT.D.

THE CATHOLIC TEACHER'S COMPANION

PRACTICAL AIDS FOR CATHOLIC TEACHERS

SEX EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN CHASTITY

BY

REV. FELIX M. KIRSCH, O.M.CAP., PH.D., LITT.D.

CAPUCHIN COLLEGE, CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

WITH A FOREWORD BY

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FOREWORD

Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical on Christian Education sounded the needed warning that mere sex education is not a cure for sex aberration. The words of the Supreme Teacher of Christendom are freely quoted in the present work, *Sex Education and Training in Chastity.* They are selected for educators as the norm by which to test the real Catholic character of the author's treatment of a holy and delicate subject. The treatment is direct, clear, and comprehensive.

The work is intended for the mature mind. It will prove a boon to perplexed pastors and teachers. If it is frank, it is a frankness like that of Holy Scripture, devoid of anything that might offend the informed Christian mind. Catholic reticence has perhaps in the past held this frankness too much in check, lest greater harm result. Father Kirsch realizes that the vagaries of the present day on the question of sex education amount practically to sex mania. He would have sanity oppose it, as truth must ever oppose error. Fearlessly he departs from current thought whenever he finds it contrary to spiritualized sanity. Unhesitatingly he accepts the Church's sound treatment of sex and chastity, which has stood the test of ages. Prudently he supplements this with whatever has proved helpful in the modern studies of his subject.

It is gratifying to find the law of God stressed rather than the laws of hygiene and sanitation. The need of sex instruction is insisted upon and the question is capably treated. In this instruction the home is given its place of honor and the responsibilities of parents and religious teachers are clearly defined. Public sex instruction is properly restricted to a minimum.

A chapter especially valuable is the one on "Catholic Character Education." Here the author proves that the virtue of chastity is not a habit that can be acquired independently of the other virtues. If the child is to be educated to chastity, the teacher must inculcate the fear and love of God, obedience, humility, docility, self-denial, and self-control. The will of the child must be strengthened as its character is developed. It must be trained to use the indispensable and supernatural aids of religion.

On the other hand, the youth of our generation must learn that it is not competent of itself to deal with the question of chastity and sex; that ephemeral publications are not the sources of authoritative teaching in these very grave matters; that mere information on sex matters without the strengthening of the will through the discipline of religion is likely to prove an incentive to vice rather than a stimulus to virtue. In a word, training in chastity is a hard task, to be accomplished only as part of a complete Catholic education.

The attention of priests is especially directed to the chapter, "Education for Catholic Marriage."

May this volume have the Godspeed of Him who is the Giver of chastity, as He is the Giver of all good gifts. May the most chaste Virgin, whose intercession the author so confidently implores, win for it the attention of those who have the divine commission to teach chastity to our youth, and also the grace of their particular state to inculcate it—priests, parents, and teachers. May our English-speaking youth profit by its salutary lessons.

+ John T. McNicholas

Archbishop of Cincinnati

21 July, 1930

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of preserving chastity is as old as the human race. Yet the problem remains ever new because, while human nature and the temptations from within remain the same, the temptations from without are ever changing. It is not only the individual that is confronted with the problem, but each new generation must make its adjustment to what will always remain a situation that tries men's souls. The adjustment made by the respective generation as well as by the individual is a key to the philosophy of the age and a measure of the individual.

It is admitted by all observers that the situation confronting the present generation is a particularly trying one; the temptations from without have grown to an alarming extent, while the supports from within have been weakened very seriously. And what adjustment is being offered? Here is the solution recommended by the intellectualist: immorality is due to the lack of knowledge; enlighten both young and old, and the problem will be solved. The physical culturist traces the prevalence of immorality to weak nerves and soft bodies, and counsels strenuous exercise or the sun and air of the golf course. The psychologist of a certain school declares it futile to attempt the repression of what cannot be repressed, and the psychoanalyst promises a cure if the patient will reveal what is in his subconscious mind. There remains the large group of those who contend that it is wrong to label as immoral what is practiced by so many, or what is at least the craving of so many, and hence they talk of a super-morality based on the statistics of how the majority live or want to live.

POPE PIUS XI CONDEMNS NATURALISTIC SEX EDUCATION

All these solutions are various phases of the pedagogic naturalism so vigorously and so effectively condemned by Pope Pius XI in his recent *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth.* None of these solutions can be adequate, as they treat at most only one phase of man's complex nature, and ignore altogether the weakness of his nature caused by original sin and requiring the assistance of supernatural aids to lead a life in keeping with his supernatural destiny. Hence there was ample justification for the Pope's vigorous condemnation of the solution recommended for the schools: His Holiness speaks of the "very grave danger of the naturalism which nowadays invades the field of education in that most delicate matter of purity of morals":

> Far too common is the error of those who with dangerous assurance and under an ugly term propagate a so-called sex education, falsely imagining they can forearm youths against the dangers of sensuality by means purely natural, such as a foolhardy initiation and precautionary instruction for all indiscriminately, even in public; and, worse still, by exposing them at an early age to the occasions, in order to accustom them, so it is argued, and as it were to harden them against such dangers.
>
> Such persons grievously err in refusing to recognize the inborn weakness of human nature, and the law of which the Apostle speaks, fighting against the law of the mind;[1] and also in ignoring the experience of facts, from

[1] Rom. VII, 23.

> which it is clear that, particularly in young people, evil practices are the effect not so much of ignorance of intellect as of weakness of a will exposed to dangerous occasions, and unsupported by the means of grace.
>
> In this extremely delicate matter, if, all things considered, some private instruction is found necessary and opportune, from those who hold from God the commission to teach and who have the grace of state, every precaution must be taken. Such precautions are well known in traditional Christian education, and are adequately described by Antoniano cited above, when he says:[2]
>
> "Such is our misery and inclination to sin, that often, in the very things considered to be remedies against sin, we find occasions for and inducements to sin itself. Hence it is of the highest importance that a good father, while discussing with his son a matter so delicate, should be well on his guard and not descend to details, nor refer to the various ways in which this infernal hydra destroys with its poison so large a portion of the world; otherwise it may happen that, instead of extinguishing this fire, he unwittingly stirs or kindles it in the simple and tender heart of the child. Speaking generally, during the period of childhood it suffices to employ those remedies which produce the double effect of opening the door to the virtue of purity and closing the door upon vice."[3]

This is an admirable statement since it not only exposes the fallacies of those who expect salvation from purely mental means but at the same time describes clearly the positive method of fighting unchastity, which is the cultivation of the virtue of chastity. If you would drive out darkness, you must let in the light.

---

[2] Silvio Antoniano, *Dell'educazione cristiana dei figliuoli*, lib. II, c. 88.

[3] The quotation is from the Official English Translation issued by the Vatican Polyglot Press, 1929, p. 23.

The reason assigned by the Pope for condemning the naturalistic scheme of those who urge sex instruction as the panacea for sex evils is that they ignore the inborn weakness of human nature and contradict the evidence of well-known facts that it is weakness of will unsupported by divine grace, and not ignorance, that is chiefly responsible for immorality, particularly among the young. However, the Pope frankly admits that instruction may become necessary, but insists that such instruction, if found necessary and opportune, be given only by those who hold from God the commission to teach and who have the grace of state, i.e., priests, parents, and teachers. With regard to the precautions to be taken when giving such instruction, the Pope quotes from Cardinal Antoniano's book *On the Christian Education of Youth* that while imparting the instruction there should be no discussion of physical details or of the ways and means of sin. Instead, there should be, especially during the early period in the child's life, an insistence on the positive side of chastity, lest the child know more about the vice than about the virtue.

It will be helpful, in connection with this quotation, to append the rest of the chapter from the Cardinal's book praised so highly by the Pope:

> Preachers, too, and confessors cannot be too careful in this matter. However, after the child has grown older and is therefore more mature in mind, and when his good education has properly forearmed him, there will be less danger in letting him know to some extent the nature of this enemy that makes so fierce an attack upon the young, and hence the father may then instruct the youth more fully about the subject of chastity, in order that the growing boy may come to love this beautiful virtue and

> be filled with horror and hatred for the sin of lust. And especially when the time of marriage approaches, the father will urge his son to keep the marriage vow. It is thus that the saintly Tobias acted when he spoke to his son: "Take heed to keep thyself, my son, from all fornication, and beside thy wife never endure to know a crime."[4] For this purpose it will be useful to avail oneself of all that I have said in my first book on the Sacrament of Matrimony.[5]

The book referred to by the Cardinal is the first part of his *Christian Education of Youth*. It contains much that might be called sex information, besides giving detailed instructions about the graces of the Sacrament of Matrimony, the proper choice of a helpmate, the purpose of marriage, the prayers to be said to obtain the blessing of offspring, and about the spiritual and bodily care of the children.

There is a remarkable similarity between Cardinal Antoniano's advice and the instructions given in the *Catechism of the Council of Trent* to parish priests for dealing with the Sixth Commandment:

> In the explanation of this Commandment, the Pastor has need of great caution and prudence, and should treat with great delicacy a subject which requires brevity rather than copiousness of exposition. For it is to be feared that if he explained in too great detail or at length the ways in which this Commandment is violated, he might unintentionally speak of subjects which, instead of extinguishing, usually serve rather to inflame corrupt passions. As, however, the precept contains many things which cannot

---

[4] Tob. IV, 13.

[5] The quotation is from the text of Antoniano's book published by F. X. Kunz in Vol. I of the *Bibliothek der katholischen Pädagogik*, Freiburg, 1888, pp. 256 ff.

be passed over in silence, the Pastor should explain them in their proper order and place.[6]

The Catechism then goes on to explain that parish priests should give public instruction on the reasons why adultery and fornication are forbidden by the Sixth Commandment, and make plain the fact that the Commandment prohibits not only thoughts but "every sort of immodesty and impurity by which the body is defiled." The Catechism gives this further instruction: "The Pastor should add the decrees of the Council of Trent against adulterers, and those who keep harlots and concubines, omitting many other species of immodesty and lust, of which each individual is to be admonished privately, as circumstances of time and person may require." Much more space is given to the consideration of the positive part of chastity: what the Sixth Commandment prescribes; reflections which help one to practice chastity; and the means of practicing chastity. The means enumerated are the following: avoidance of idleness, temperance in food and drink, custody of the eyes, avoidance of immodest dress, avoidance of impure conversation, reading, and pictures, frequentation of the Sacraments, and mortification.

THE TRADITION OF THE CHURCH

We realize that Pope Pius XI, in advising positive treatment and in cautioning great care in dealing publicly with regard to what the Commandment prohibits, is continuing the tradition of the Council of Trent and of the Church in general. The tradition of the wise caution exercised in this matter by the Church is brought out clearly in the direction given to the confessor in the new Code of Canon Law: "*Caveat omnino . . . ne curiosis aut inutilibus quaestionibus, maxime circa sextum Decalogi praeceptum, quemquam detineat, et praesertim ne iuniores de iis quae ignorant imprudenter interroget.*"[7] However, the similarity between the text of the Roman Catechism and of Cardinal Antoniano's instruction is not a mere coincidence. The first edition of the Catechism of the Council of Trent was published at Rome in 1556, and is commonly called the Manutian because it was printed by Paulus Manutius at the command of Pope Pius V. According to some authors, the question of publishing the Catechism was brought up by St. Charles Borromeo during the 18th session of the Council of Trent,[8] and Pope Pius XI reminds us that Silvio Antoniano's book was written at the suggestion and under the inspiration of St. Charles Borromeo—the first edition being published at Verona in 1583, seventeen years after the Roman Catechism—and hence we need not be surprised to find both documents, the *Catechism of the Council of Trent* and the *Christian Education of Youth*, altogether in agreement with regard to how the delicate matter should be treated.

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[6] John A. McHugh, O.P., and Charles J. Callan, O.P., *Catechism of the Council of Trent for Parish Priests,* New York, 1923.

However, not only are these documents in agreement with each other on the subject, but they both continue, as we shall attempt to show later, the tradition of the Church in dealing with chastity. The Church, unlike the heretic who accepts only a part of the truth, accepts the whole truth and has always insisted on both the positive and the negative treatment of the virtue. In this matter the passing of the centuries has brought no change whatever. When in the twentieth century Pope Pius XI, the illustrious son of Lombardy and former Cardinal-Archbishop of Milan, restates the doctrine preached in the sixteenth century by St. Charles Borromeo, another son of Lombardy and also Cardinal-Archbishop of Milan, he is continuing not merely a local tradition but a tradition that has continued from the days of the Apostles through the centuries of the Fathers and the Middle Ages down to our own day. We trust to show later the perpetuity of this tradition in the Catholic Church, but for the present we wish to insist that the ancient tradition is still equal to meet the most modern needs of our day. We recently had an illustration of the vitality of this tradition with regard to the action taken by the Catholics of France and Germany in dealing with the same problem of sex instruction as was touched upon in the Encyclical.

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[7] Canon 888, No. 2.

[8] McHugh and Callan, *op. cit.*, p. xxiii.

Meeting Modern Needs

In April, 1929, there was held in Paris the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Association of Christian Marriage for the purpose of taking up the matter of the active campaign that is being waged, not only in several countries, but also by several international educational organizations, in behalf of introducing sex instruction into the schools. The Catholic Congress approached the subject from the standpoint of defining and unifying the position of Catholics with regard to this serious problem. Among the speakers were outstanding priests, educators, doctors, and sociologists.

In his introduction to the report of the work done by the Congress[9] Abbé Dermine declares that the training in chastity must be based chiefly on the formation of character in connection with developing a high sense of honor and self-respect. The Superior General of the Sulpicians, Abbé Verdier, who has since been made Cardinal Archbishop of Paris, presented the general resolutions of the Congress. In doing so he declared that an examination of conscience with regard to past neglect was in order and that efforts should be made in the future to prevent the mistakes of the past. He condemned "the policy of silence as dangerous both in practice and in principle, since it has proved harmful to the individual and to society." To impart the necessary instruction in a proper way, he declared to be "a grave obligation of charity and even of justice," especially in the case of adolescents, since they are exposed to strong temptations from within and from without. The child was therefore said to "have the *right* to proper instruction in the 'facts of life' and in the means of overcoming temptation; and since every right postulates a corresponding duty, we must maintain that someone of his environment must impart this information." Parents were said to have the chief responsibility in this respect, but they themselves need to be informed in the matter and method of instructing their children, and when they fail to do their duty others must take their place.* Finally, the hope was expressed that proper instruction would safeguard the child against the temptations of adolescence and the occasions of sin.

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[9] *L'église et l'éducation sexuelle,* par un groupe de professeurs, d'éducateurs et de sociologues, Paris, 1929.

* Cf. *infra,* pp. 163 ff.

While this Catholic Congress declared the system of absolute silence to be dangerous and wrong, it condemned the proposal of having sex instruction given collectively in the schoolroom. Dr. Otto Pasteau had been commissioned to make a report before the Congress on "How to Instruct Children in Sex Matters." His report on the subject has been published in the September, 1929, issue of the *Bulletin de la Société Médicale de St. Luc, St. Côme et St. Damien*, and as this magazine is the official organ of the Catholic doctors of France, the report may be considered to represent the conclusions generally accepted by this large and important group of French Catholics. We find that Dr. Pasteau's Report carries out in detail the form of sex instruction recommended by Père M. S. Gillet, O.P., now the Master General of the Dominican Order, in his book, *Innocence and Ignorance.*[10]

In Germany there was held in Düsseldorf, December 7-9, 1928, a combined meeting of the German Institute for Scientific Pedagogy and the Catholic School Association for the purpose of dealing with the subject of sex education. The meeting was largely attended, 1,500 tickets being sold, and all but one of the papers read at the meeting have been published—most of them in amplified form—by Father Joseph Schröteler, S.J., under the title *Die geschlechtliche Erziehung.*[11] The most important essay is that by the Editor on "The Sexual Needs of Our Youth and the Aims of Sexual Pedagogy." The writer brings out clearly the crying need of assisting the young in preserving their chastity amid the dreadful temptations surrounding them on all sides. He confesses that the German Catholics have come to realize that, while sex instruction is not the panacea many had expected it to be for all immorality, yet they recognize that much good can be done by proper instruction, though the chief factor remains the strengthening of the will and the developing of strong character. Other papers were presented by university professors, one by a judge of the children's court, some by educators in the various schools, and one by a woman, Minna Schumacher-Köhl, who spoke on "Woman and Sex Education," and stressed the need of proper instruction for children.

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[10] Translated by the Rev. Dr. J. Elliott Ross, New York, 1917.

[11] Düsseldorf, 1929.

Another important German publication is the booklet *Reverentia Puero*,[12] by Cardinal Bertram of Breslau, in which His Eminence takes issue with the publication brought out by the German Government *Crimes Against Morality in Intermediate and High Schools and Their Disciplinary Treatment* [13] with an Introduction by the Ministry of Religion.

The Government publication presents the opinion rendered by Professors W. Hoffmann and W. Stern in answer to the request made by the German Ministry of Religion as to what remedial measures should be taken to stop the vices that threaten to corrupt the German youth. The Cardinal commends the German Ministry for admitting that "the school, juvenile court, and juvenile judge cannot control the situation, and that the co-operation of the home and Church is required." But His Eminence condemns the naturalistic viewpoint prevailing throughout the book, and insists that the old-time safeguards of modesty and proper and timely instruction, in union with the means of grace, constitute the best protection against the inroads of sin and vice.

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[12] Freiburg, 1929.

[13] Leipzig, 1928.

Preserving the Sense of Shame

The reticence that has always characterized the practice of the Church in dealing with the problem of sex control is closely associated with the sense of shame that is inborn in human nature. The Bishops of Germany, in their Pastoral Letter of Aug. 12, 1908, explained that the sense of shame has been given by God as a safeguard of chastity, and hence efforts should be made to preserve this asset and to ward off whatever might lessen the sense of modesty. In contrast to this doctrine we have the attempt to explain the sense of shame as due originally to economic conditions. We are told, for instance, in Mrs. Hollingworth's book, *The Psychology of the Adolescent*,[14] that the standard of living rises and rises, and the boy and girl must be older and older before they can meet the standard set for marriage. Along with the inventions which raise the economic standards of respectable living, biologists have failed to invent a method of delaying puberty and the psychological impulses that mature in the teens: "Puberty comes just as it did before expensive shoes and stockings had become badges of respectability."

It is urgent therefore, so the argument reads, for parents and elders to suppress the drives of sex, if they possibly can, until the young are able to assume the economic responsibilities which exercise of sexual impulses typically entails. Otherwise parents and elders will be burdened with the offspring of the economically incompetent young. This they do not desire. Thus the elders *want* the youth to suppress sexual impulses. Therefore, automatically, these impulses become "bad." One who exercises them in ways contrary to the customs prescribed by economic conditions is a "bad" girl or a "bad" boy.

---

[14] New York, 1928, pp. 103-105.

Still the admission is made that:

> No doubt there are other pressures and motives which enter into the "shamefulness" of sex. Explanation by one fact only is likely to be an over-simplification of such a problem. Nevertheless it seems highly probable that economic motives play a large part. In such matters the elders, obviously, have the advantage of the young. Innuendoes inculcated from early childhood have effect in proportion to the sensitiveness and intelligence of the child. The most obvious method of social control is to frighten. The youth has not as yet the data from experience or from history on the basis of which to reason independently. He (or she) is thus placed in a position where he tends to grow up, regarding as mysteriously evil and dangerous one of his fundamental impulses, which later, by some miracle of psychological hocus-pocus, he is expected to recognize as entirely proper, good, and even essential to the continuation and welfare of the nation. The fatuity of this procedure is extreme and constitutes a violation of the principles of education and of mental hygiene. Much misery results from the inconsistency of social pressure, for those who submit themselves completely to its control.

A Mere Convention?

We have quoted so extensively from Mrs. Hollingworth's book in order to illustrate the present-day tendency to explain away all standards of morality as being but mere conventionalities. The sense of shame is not a result of artificial standards, but is a sequel of the first sin of Adam and Eve: "And the eyes of them both were opened: and when they perceived themselves to be naked, they sewed together fig leaves, and made themselves aprons."[15] The sense of shame is innate in fallen humanity. It is developed and conventionalized by custom. Convention does not establish the standard. We agree with Mr. Chesterton that conventions differ and that conventions, as such, are not necessarily universal or eternal. But we do not admit that the cry in the human heart for conventions is merely conventional. The sense of shame that impelled our first parents to cover their nakedness has remained among all peoples as a psycho-physical phenomenon. Somerville declares that the New Georgians of the Solomon Islands wear a loin cloth and "have the same ideas of what is decent with regard to certain acts and exposures that we ourselves have."[16] Haddon, writing in the same *Journal* in the year 1890, declares the tribes of Torres Straits to be a very decent people, even given to prudery. A recent study of the material culture of the Clayoquot Indians who inhabit the West Coast of Vancouver Island, reports that though no special huts are set aside for latrines, yet the women take great care that they shall not be seen by anyone while obtaining relief. Often they will walk a half-mile away to make certain that they have privacy.* The author of *Medical Essays*[17] gives numerous instances of a well-developed sense of shame among primitive peoples.

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[15] Gen. III, 7.

[16] *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, 1897.

* Vincent A. Koppert, O.S.B., *Contributions to Clayoquot Ethnology*, Washington, D. C., 1930, pp. 21-22.

[17] Milwaukee, 1928, pp. 363-366.

The Church has been charged with encouraging prudishness and false modesty in the interest of pietism and false asceticism. However, even a superficial examination of Christian writers will yield valuable information as to how the rights of the body were never neglected by the Church. In our second chapter * we present plentiful evidence to prove that the Church has always observed the golden mean by encouraging modesty without prudishness.

Even in the 16th century when there was much looseness of morals everywhere, Catholic Churchmen did not forget the important function of the sense of shame. What Cardinal Sadoleto wrote in 1533 † has a special significance in our day when there is so much shamelessness abroad and when merchants, for instance, do not hesitate to advertise in the newspapers that the clothes they are selling for women are "impudent."

> *Verecundia* (the word for modesty) is derived from the verb *vereri* (to fear), for it is the act of feeling shame and blushing, painting the faults upon the face and paying a generous fine for the wrong done. And yet the blush is the pledge of a good disposition and of the virtue we look for in a boy, so that there seems much fitness in the saying, "He blushed—all's well." For shame itself is a habit of taking precaution against the occurrence of anything which may cause a blush: and while it is appropriate to any time in life, it is the chief grace of youth; nor should we be wrong in describing it as the averter of crime and the bulwark of temperance and virtue. And I would urge upon any parents, with whom

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* *Infra*, pp. 24 ff.

† *De pueris recte instituendis*. Tr. by E. T. Campagnac and K. Forbes, New York, 1916, pp. 53-54.

> my influence is likely to have weight, that they delay not to cherish and increase in their children this root of shame which nature has planted in their fresh minds. They can rely upon reaping a rich harvest for their pains. For though a sense of shame may not actually be virtue itself, it is the chief support to virtue: since it is the dread of an evil name and of disgrace; and this is a stern and vigilant guardian of virtue. So those who call shame a kind of divine timidity seem to me to get nearer the right definition of this emotion. It alone dreads the loss of that one well-nigh divine possession, which we win from high honor and office—to wit, our credit and good repute.

Indeed, the sense of modesty is one of the guardian angels given us by God for the safeguarding of chastity. It is significant that our intellectualistic age fails to understand the powerful defensive instincts of the subconscious life which find their expression in the sentiment of modesty Professor F. W. Foerster deserves credit for bringing out in his several books the importance of cultivating the sense of modesty. He believes the sense of shame to be the greatest protective force we have in the sphere of sex: "It is precisely because modesty preserves the sexual field from the full knowledge which reflection throws upon it that it has for the educator and for the hygienist such a great value that nothing will ever replace it." He rightly believes that a highly developed sense of shame protects young people better than the best instruction—and better counteracts any knowledge they may obtain from impure sources.

Père Gillet, O.P., observes that modesty, whose very name evokes the idea of whiteness, resembles not the snow of the streets that melts at the first rays of the sun, but rather the snow of the mountain-tops that the full sun cannot penetrate. Wolfram von Eschenbach describes modesty as "the bulwark which protects all good customs"; and Professor F. T. Vischer says: "Reticence is not hypocrisy; a nation is doomed once it ceases to feel shame." In the light of these sane judgments, it is regrettable that there are those who maintain that a sense of shame is an obsolete survival of a past dark age, a thing derived from some ancient superstition as to the evil nature of all sex functions.

Professor Foerster reminds us that even scientific writers overlook the fact that very deeply rooted instincts invariably have some fundamental biological function to discharge. It is true, that the mere intellect may not always understand what these functions are. In fact, it may be that one of the most important functions of these instincts is to bar out the intellect. The instincts may serve to protect our most important vital processes from the dangers that threaten them through excess of conscious attention. Benjamin Kidd maintains in his *Social Evolution* that the invasion of the whole sphere of life by the intellect is fatal to the evolution of the race. Hence we realize the important service rendered to the race by religion that it keeps the intellect in check. The mysteries of religion have a very important function for preserving the mental health of the individual as well as of the race.

The sense of shame is an instinct that safeguards mental and moral health. It is intended to draw a veil of unconsciousness over the deepest mystery of life and to preserve it from too anxious thought.

Nietzsche has called attention to the profound truth illustrated by the legend of Eros, who, in spite of being forbidden to do so, insisted upon turning the light of his torch upon Psyche. Nietzsche contends that the glaring light of intellectual reflection can do terrible damage in certain regions of the inner life. What our sexual nature needs most is protection from our own thoughts. The best way to secure this protection is by properly cultivating the sense of shame. It is in the field of sex especially that we should remember that too much reflection is an unwholesome and disturbing influence. It may be well to insist upon this strongly in view of the tendency of our age to probe into everything, and to think nothing beyond scientific analysis.

Hygiene of the Imagination

By preserving the sense of shame, we shall be doing much to encourage a proper hygiene of the imagination. Once the sexual feeling has secured control of the imagination, it will be all-powerful. External control is secondary in comparison with the force exerted by the imagination. We must get our young people to realize how deep is the influence that the images in our mind exert over our whole future conduct and our stability of character in general. Even the reality is not so dangerous as what the imagination is apt to conjure up before the mind. Schopenhauer, in analyzing the influence of the sexual instinct upon the imagination, has exposed the deceitful and enticing magic of illusion. Hence a word of warning with regard to those plays or pictures or magazines that are apt to dress up lust in an enticing, suggestive way.

We shall render a great service to young people by warning them betimes about the illusions of the images of pleasure and enjoyment created by such artificial means. Plain words about the illusory power of a perverted imagination may preserve them from the pitfall. We must appeal to their sense of honor to rise superior to the befogging and beclouding influence of false illusions.

However, while insisting upon the importance of the sense of shame, we must remember that it is not the same as chastity, but is no more than its outer guard. "Shame cannot properly be spoken of as a virtue; for it is more like a feeling or emotion than a habit or trained faculty. At least, it is defined as a kind of fear or disgrace, and its effects are analogous to those of the fear that is excited by danger; for men blush when they are ashamed, while the fear of death makes them pale." * Also, we may admit that the sense of shame is relative on many points. Still, there are certain objects that would arouse the sense of shame universally. Indeed, to say of a person that he has lost his sense of shame would be tantamount to saying that he has lost all sense of decency.

The new psychology has again drawn attention to the intimate connection between the external stimuli and the interior reactions. By keeping control of the body in obedience to the rules of modesty, we shall obtain a reaction upon the interior emotions. There are modern psychologists who teach that by acting as if you are under the influence of a certain emotion, you tend to produce that emotion, or rather to

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* Aristotle, *Ethics*, IV, 9; on the sense of shame, cf. Locke, *Thoughts*, § 60.

evoke it. By acting as if he is modest and chaste, the boy tends to evoke the spirit of chastity.

Still, there may be exaggerated demands made in the interest of modesty. For instance, it would seem there is sufficient reason to doubt the statement made by Father Kilian J. Hennrich, O.M.Cap., in *Watchful Elders*:[18] "The advice of some to let the young boys and girls get acquainted with the difference in sex organs during the period of their innocence is not sound and will surely lead to grave temptations during adolescence." Many priests whom we consulted in the matter believe, on the contrary, that such instruction will lessen temptation during adolescence, as it will check the morbid curiosity of that age period to explore the mysterious field. Alban Stolz, in his classical *Erziehungskunst*, descants in five different places on the children's excessive curiosity regarding things sexual, which is heightened by the studied secretiveness of their elders. Fathers Gatterer and Krus advise in *Educating to Purity* that something may be said to children anent the differences of sex in connection with the history of the creation of man. Many priests believe that we shall spare the young folk the numerous temptations that may result from the prurient investigation of this fact later on, at the frequent stirrings of passion, by permitting boys and girls under five years of age to bathe together in the mother's presence. Thus, little boys and girls can learn their differences of anatomy before such mutual inspection in any way proves a temptation. This would also dispel the idea that there is something mysterious behind everything sexual. Nor would modesty suffer thence, as the mother would carefully make the little ones understand that outside of this one occasion of her bathing and cleaning them together to save time, even little folk should never uncover themselves in one another's presence.

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[18] Milwaukee, 1929, p. 30.

By adopting this practice there will be no need for criticizing and punishing children for playing "doctor games" or "peeping Tom" when they are prompted by no other motive than that of natural curiosity to know what the opposite sex is like. When suggesting that young children should learn of sex differences in a natural, harmless way, at a time when there are as yet no sexual emotions, we are not saying anything that might be interpreted as countenancing anything like exhibitionism after the sex life has become conscious. At that time half-veiled representation calls for one kind of sexual suggestion, and the nude figure merely calls for another kind of sexual suggestion.

Professor Foerster is right in saying there was much justification in a reaction against false prudery, a prudery itself derived from unwholesome reflection and not from any deep and pure instinct. To-day, however, this reaction has shot far beyond the mark. It has been forgotten that a far more wholesome instinct lies behind the ancient modesty with regard to sex matters than can be found in the shamelessness of modern life. This modesty has stood for centuries as a barrier between the hidden sources of life and strength, the destructive influences of reflection and the danger of an over-excitation of sexual feeling by the imagination. By the time the sexual over-excitability and degeneracy of our time has reached a further stage of development, people will perhaps gradually realize the danger of filling the soul with images of sex processes. Our age must again learn the need and value of that protective instinct of the subconscious life which we call the sense of shame.

The cult of the nude has gone to further extremes in Germany than here, and it behooves our country to take a warning from the experiences gained by the people overseas. The Bishops of Austria and Germany denounced the cult in no uncertain terms in 1927, and shortly thereafter the German Medical Union for Social Ethics passed a resolution condemning in strong terms the rapid increase of shamelessness, and also the profligate nudity of modern theatrical productions. After calling attention to the connection between the loss of shame and certain diseases, the resolution continues:

> The German Medical Union for Social Ethics deems it its duty to call upon the medical men of Germany to take a strong stand against the ever-spreading cult of the nude. It must be made clear to our people that serious dangers are here threatening in a moral, and therefore also in a hygienic, way. It is our duty to point out also that adequate physical culture does not at all call for the extremes that we are witnessing to-day.
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> We must declare emphatically that the sense of shame—in its natural and legitimate form, not an unnatural prudishness—must be preserved at all cost, for we see in this sense the expression of respect for one's own personality. To destroy this sense means destruction of the moral foundations of one's personality.

A Grave and Delicate Problem

While it is well for us to heed what Catholics in other countries have done and are doing to stem the tide of immorality, we must provide specific remedies for our own ills at home. Of course, we confess that the principles of Catholic morality remain eternally and everywhere the same and we are grateful for the Pope's emphatic restatement, in his recent Encyclical, of important moral truths. Still, there is danger at times that we may fail to apply these principles in the most effective way to a concrete situation. The situation with regard to sexual immorality is certainly no less grave in America, than in France and Germany; and, while we have over half of our Catholic children, i.e., more than two millions, in our public schools, we must assuredly be no less interested than are the French and German Catholics in the matter of sex instruction, for persistent efforts have been made for years to introduce this subject into our public high schools, where we have 442,284 of our Catholic boys and girls.[19]

There is, indeed, universal complaint about the growing immorality in our country, and hence the writer thought it well to make a study as to what means might be devised to protect our young people. In this undertaking he found willing collaborators, and he was greatly encouraged by the generous help he received from those he approached in the matter. At the Catholic University of America [20] the Rev. Drs. John M. Cooper, John A. Ryan, Paul H. Furfey, and Thomas V. Moore, O.S.B., gave freely of their time to advise and assist in the study; the Rev. Drs. George Johnson, William J. Kerby, and F. Augustine Walsh, O.S.B., read the entire work, both in manuscript and in proof, and offered many suggestions for improving the book. At the headquarters of the United States Public Health Service the author likewise received helpful information. The same must be said of the generous assistance given by the staff of the American Social Hygiene Association. Special mention must be made of the services rendered by Dr. Harry H. Moore and Mr. Willard C. Smith, both of the United States Public Health Service, and by Dr. Adolf Meyer, of Johns Hopkins University. The study will reveal also the invaluable help received from many priests and doctors who granted interviews or generously answered questionnaires in a way that often required hours of work. At the Capuchin College there were likewise willing helpers: the Rev. Dr. Claude Vogel, O.M.Cap., not only acted as theological censor, but also assisted the author by his helpful advice and many practical suggestions; the Rev. John M. Lenhart, O.M.Cap., furnished literature and historical data that proved valuable. To these collaborators the writer owes a heavy debt of gratitude. Without their generous help the study would have been impossible.

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[19] These figures have been furnished by Mr. Francis M. Crowley, Director of the Department of Education of the National Catholic Welfare Conference; cf. *infra*, p. 179.

[20] A large section of the present book was presented to the Faculty of Philosophy of the Catholic University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Yet the writer feels misgivings about the result of his effort. He realizes, for instance, that critics may charge him with repeatedly insisting upon what might seem obvious to many readers. However, he would say in his defense that he has found such widespread ignorance not only about the Church's attitude towards sex education but also about what our young people need in this regard that he deemed it necessary to restate important principles rather frequently

Again, the author recognizes the difficulty mentioned by an invalid friend when he wrote from his bed of pain: "You are venturing upon holy ground where only angels dare to walk with freedom, while human beings must there be filled with deepest humility and tread with greatest circumspection." Yes, the writer realizes the hazardous nature of his venture; yet, as he completes the labor of several years on the Feast of the Annunciation of Our Lady, he turns confidently to her who is the Mother of God and the mother of men, and begs her to bless the effort that has been made in behalf of a virtue that has ever been dear to her immaculate heart:

Nos cum Prole pia
Benedicat Virgo Maria!

CHAPTER I

URGENCY OF THE PROBLEM

Chastity is essential to a good life. When St. Gregory the Great tells us in his 13th Homily on the Gospels that chastity without other good works does not amount to much, but that without it no other good work will prosper, he states the positive need of chastity if we would build up a life of morality and virtue. Chastity implies the control of the body and its passions, and hence is the indispensable condition of all moral life. Guard the virtue of chastity, and other virtues will be less difficult. Failings against chastity are the most frequent cause of eternal damnation. St. Alphonsus agrees with St. Jerome that more souls are damned for impurity than for any other vice. Yes, St. Alphonsus even ventures to say that all who are lost eternally, are lost because of this vice, or at least not without being in some way implicated in unchastity.[1]

The Danger of Exaggerating Present-Day Evils

Of course, we must be on our guard against exaggerating present-day evils. Conscious of the problem that immorality will always present to the race, we must be on our guard lest we commit the common error of over-exaggerating present-day evils, because it is the present day and its ills that confront us. It may be true that every age will think that sex is flaunted in public life. Still, conditions at the present day will justify the charge that "it has struck sex o'clock in America." Everywhere we hear the complaint that the literature of the day, the popular magazine, the scandal sheet, the movies, the fashions, sports, dances, night clubs, road houses, and bathing beaches have conspired to flaunt sex publicly. It is made almost impossible for people to keep their mind off the subject.

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[1] *Theologia moralis*, lib. 4. cap. 2. dub. I, n. 313.

There is often the deliberate intention to pander to the sex instinct. Managers of public amusements quite often act on the principle that to make any feature very popular they must offer some sex appeal. They engineer sex excitement deliberately. Priests who have ventured to act as advisers in the making of motion pictures that involved Bible stories or other sacred subjects, have confessed how the managers insist on distorting even the Bible version of certain events in order to introduce the alluring subject. Hence no one need be surprised to learn that a Cleveland Board of Censors who examined the moral influence of 290 films, had to condemn 40 per cent as immoral in influence.[2] When we consider that even Aristotle, who was a pagan, bids us not to tolerate indecent pictures, lest children, seeing them, be corrupted, we shall realize what a factor the modern motion picture with its immense popularity (it has been estimated that 115,000,000 Americans attend the movies weekly*), must be for the problem of chastity. We can agree with the popular writer who recently characterized most picture houses as "side street infernos." Very few of us realize, perhaps, the extent to which children frequent these motion pictures. Of 3,000 Chicago children who answered a questionnaire submitted by Mrs. E. L. Moulton, of the Parent-Teacher Association, 87 per cent said they attended from one to seven or more shows every week.

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[2] *Education*, Oct., 1928, p. 71.

* *Cf. infra*, pp. 237 ff.

Among the letters sent to health authorities in regard to the venereal disease problem, the note that recurs most frequently is the part that the theater and the moving picture play in arousing the passions. The following statement in one of the letters is characteristic: "If there is anything on earth that needs your attention it is the theater and moving picture, which are at the bottom of working up a man's passion, causing him to seek 'the woman'; whereas if the theater and pictures were moral and clean, such thoughts would not arise." The same writer, after reviewing the temptations of modern dances and bathing beaches, confesses: "In fact, it seems impossible for a young man to find a place of amusement without coming away with his passion agitated to a degree that demands satisfaction." While such statements may indicate abnormal moral weakness in the writer of the letter, they serve to illustrate the dangers that confront our young people almost everywhere.

Another feature that is characteristic of the present day is the salacious magazine. True, there have always been publications that catered to the taste of the prurient, but probably at no time was this class of literature so popular as it is to-day. Mr. Frank R. Kent, who reported in *The Independent*,[3] the results of his nationwide investigation of the matter, confessed that he was amazed at "the truly extraor-

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[3] June 20, 1925.

ST. ALBERT'S COLLEGE LIBRARY

dinary extent to which the country is drenched with smut by the steadily increasing stream of pornographic periodicals and dirty fiction magazines.'' He cites one town where a newsdealer sells 2,200 copies of a single monthly devoted exclusively to stories of sex experiences and the nude in art, and another where, out of 110 periodicals on sale in a single store, 60 were either entirely of a prurient type or bordered on the libidinous line. A research conducted recently in one of our eastern cities disclosed the fact that a certain vile magazine was most popular with the children of the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades of the parochial schools.

Publishers realize the money value of the sex appeal. A woman, author of several novels, was offered a large sum of money if she would introduce that appeal into the sequel to a novel that had all the features that would call for a large sale, save the sex factor. The woman, however, would rather sacrifice the sum of money than her principle.

Hence there is reason in our country for the warning given by Pope Pius XI, in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*:

> More than ever nowadays an extended and careful vigilance is necessary, inasmuch as the dangers of moral and religious ship-wreck are greater for inexperienced youth. Especially is this true of impious and immoral books, often diabolically circulated at low prices; of the cinema, which multiplies every kind of exhibition; and now also of the radio, which facilitates every kind of reading. These most powerful means of publicity, which can be of great utility for instruction and education when directed by sound principles, are only too often used as an incentive to evil passions and greed for gain.

> . . . How often today must parents and educators bewail the corruption of youth brought about by the modern theatre and the vile book![4]

No chain is stronger than its weakest link and, measured by that standard, the modern age is weak indeed, as the home, that essential unit of social life, has almost disappeared. There is more truth than humor in comparing the modern home with the coaling station for tramp steamers, or with the lunch counter on a railway trip, where we dash in for a hurried bite of food and dash out again and away, or with a mere place to sleep in, like a convenient haystack for the knight of the road.

But there is a more serious aspect. The serial marriages and divorces so common to-day may rightly be called successive polygamy. The figures issued by the Bureau of the Census show that for every six marriages in 1928 there was one divorce. Marriages increased by 1.5 per cent in that period, but divorces increased by 2 per cent.

Our country was at one time the most rapid in the world in its increase, but is fast approaching the stationary condition. The yearly increase in population has now fallen to 1.5 per cent. The prevalence of birth control is notorious. Since 1915 the birth rate has declined from 25.1 to 19.7 per 1,000 persons. This is offset to some extent by a decline in the death rate, which, however, is less pronounced. Americans were wont to point their finger of scorn at France for her low birth rate, but, were it not for the infusion of foreign blood into our population by immigration, we should now be in birth rate inferior to France. In 1850, exclusively of slave families, the

[4] P. 31.

average size of the family was 5.56. In 1860, excluding slaves, it declined to 5.3. In 1870 it was 5.1; 5.00 in 1880; 4.9 in 1890; 4.7 in 1900; 4.58 in 1910; 4.3 in the latest census of 1920. The childless marriage is now a common thing, and the easy divorce is the concomitant, the co-partner, of the childless marriage.

Let us not deceive ourselves. Our young people are close observers. They see all too plainly that their parents are themselves not observing in their marriage relations the law that they would impose upon their children in sex matters. Our boys and girls are prone to believe what they see with their eyes rather than what they hear with their ears. Why blame only the young people when they merely carry out the age-old proverb: "As the old birds sing, so will the young birds chirp"? Both old and young are seeking the pleasure of sex but are eliminating its creative power. They want the pleasure without any of the sacrifice entailed by the purpose of the pleasurable act. There is a retreat all along the line.

It would be well to remember the lesson of history, how other nations decayed for the same reason—the infection of sexual life and the destruction of the family unit. The roots of all life were diseased, and the nations had to die. It may be that birth prevention was the cause of their decline, or that birth prevention was one sign of a moral breakdown antecedent to national extinction.

Polybius writes (*circa* 150 B. C.):

> In our time all Greece was visited by a dearth of children . . . . and a failure of productiveness followed . . . . by our men's becoming perverted to a passion for show and money and the pleasure of an idle life, and accordingly either not marrying at all, or, if they did marry, refusing

to rear children that were born, or at most one or two out of a great number, for the sake of leaving them well off or bringing them up in extravagant luxury.

Far be it from us to over-emphasize the prevalence of immorality. We do not think it good pedagogy to stress the prevalence of immorality when dealing with the young. There is no help in such information, and it will more likely do harm. In fact, there is no possibility of giving exact figures with regard to the actual situation. Statements of some will be denied by others. At best we have only estimates. For instance, the revolting crime of contraception is of such a nature that it eludes detection and census. *Even questionnaire returns do not always offer conclusive evidence. They represent, for the most part, unsigned and unverified answers and can never claim the reliability of tested and re-checked laboratory data. Hence we should not allow any statistics of immorality to make us unduly pessimistic. The study of certain statistics might create a psychosis of utter helplessness in view of the overwhelming forces of the enemy to be conquered.*

Is Our Age the Worst?

Indeed, there is room for argument whether our age be really worse than preceding ages. Cicero's "What times! what morals!" has been ringing down through the ages. On a cuneiform fragment from one of the lowest strata of the ruins of Babylon appears the comment: "Alas! Alas! Times are not what they were!"[5] There are documents of the past that would seem to prove that the sexual morality of the young was no better at that time than it is now. In the year 1527 the Town Council of Ulm in Germany issued an order to the brothel-keepers of that city that they were no longer to admit to the brothels boys of twelve to fourteen years of age, but rather were to drive them off with birch-rods. This fact, with many others, is recorded by Hans Boesch in his *Kinderleben der deutschen Vergangenheit*,[6] and collectively these facts suffice to prove, not merely that the children of former times were no whit more moral than those of our own day, but also that the awakening of sexual activity occurred just as early then as now.

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[5] *Literary Digest*, Nov. 23, 1929, p. 24.

Anton Bierlinger speaks of the large number of brothels existing in certain sections in Germany during the Middle Ages and gives a list of names used to designate such houses.[7] What Jacques de Vitry, the famous Augustinian Friar, reports of the students in Paris in the thirteenth century may well let us doubt whether our students are exposed to any worse environment in our day.[8]

In 1817 a gentlewoman wrote to one of her friends about the depravity of the children: "My daughter's good principles are so firmly rooted, thank God, that she has been able to mix in every sort of society here without any danger of becoming smirched. But nothing like the young people of to-day has ever been seen. They make one's hair stand on end. They have neither manners nor morals.''[9] Complaints about demoralizing books are likewise not new. The Rev. Dr. John McCaffrey, President of Mt. St. Mary's College and Seminary, Emmitsburg, Md., wrote a letter to his friend Dr. Orestes A. Brownson, in Dec., 1848, in the course of which he said: "The world is flooded with demoralizing books. Parental authority is almost extinct." In July, 1849, Dr. McCaffrey writes to the same Dr. Brownson in a similar strain: "Engaged in the task of educating American boys, I find that very few indeed have been taught by their parents to obey and sacrifice self-will to duty. . . . I find that in three cases out of four the children rule the parents and ultimately study what they please, leave school when they please, and at home do what they please.''[10] A study made recently by Father Max Pribilla, S.J., shows that most of our present-day complaints have their counterparts throughout the history of the Christian era.[11]

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[6] Leipsic, 1900, p. 112.

[7] *Aus Schwaben*, Vol. II: *Sitten und Rechtsbräuche*, Wiesbaden, 1874, p. 454.

[8] "*Meretrices publicae ubique per vicos et plateas civitatis passim ad lupinaria sua clericos transeuntes quasi per violentiam pertrahebant! Quod si forte ingredi recusarent, confestim eos Sodomitas post ipsos conclamantes dicebant. In una et eadem domo scholae erant superius, prostibula inferius. Ex una parte meretrices et cum lenonibus litigabant, ex alia parte disputantes et contentiose agentes clerici proclamabant.* In some cases students went so far as to play dice on the altars in the churches." Grupp *Kulturgeschichte des Mittelalters*, Vol. II, Stuttgart, 1895, p. 390.

Yet none of this evidence of the immorality of the past will allow us to perform the ostrich act and ignore the situation that faces us to-day. And this situation is serious enough. In the year 1927, Dr. Katherine Bement Davis, General Secretary of the Bureau of Social Hygiene, sent a questionnaire dealing with sex factors to college women, married and unmarried, ranging in age from twenty-one to eighty-three. She received replies from 1,000 married women

[9] *The Journal of Social Hygiene*, April, 1927, p. 227.

[10] *America*, Sept. 12, 1925.

[11] ''Siegen und Versagen des Christentums,'' in: *Stimmen der Zeit*, Oct., 1929.

and from 1,200 who were unmarried. The average age of the unmarried at the time of reply was 36.8 years, or a year and half younger than that of the married. The results of the study were published in 1929 *Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-Two Hundred Women*, and disclose a low state of morality prevailing among a large number of the college women who answered the questionnaire.

Of the 1,000 married women, 734, or 74.51 per cent, approve "voluntary parenthood," while only 78 expressed disapproval, and 173 did not express an opinion. The reasons given by these married women for their attitude toward contraception were health (171), economic (156), and both health and economic reasons (100). Twenty-five wished no children, 213 gave indefinite or other reasons than health or economic considerations, and 255 gave no reason for their attitude.[12]

In answer to the question, *Is it right to use methods for the prevention of pregnancy?* 915 (89.7 per cent) of the unmarried women replied "Yes," while 104 (10.2 per cent) replied "No." The reasons most commonly given by the unmarried women for their opinion on this subject were economic and health considerations.[13] Many of the respondents—both married and unmarried—do not hesitate about admitting immoral practices.

When we bear in mind that while men may make laws, it is women that make the morals, and that the moral status of woman is an index to the morality of the respective age, we can understand the full significance of the Davis findings. Woman depends more

[12] Davis, *l.c.*, p. 14.

[13] Davis, *l.c.*, p. 372.

than man on traditions and customs. Once this support is gone, she is at sea with her instincts, and that situation alone is enough to bring her to the brink of the abyss. Of course, there is the obvious objection that the Davis study dealt only with one social class of our population—the college women—still, we all know that in our country there are no hard and fast lines and that the convictions of one class are not confined to that group. We have positive evidence on this head. In a questionnaire submitted to farmers towards the end of 1929, 67 per cent of the 13,341 who answered approve "Legalizing doctors to impart birth control methods to married people who apply jointly." Farm wives were more interested in the matter than husbands.[14]

Yes, birth control is an open organized movement instead of being merely a furtive, unmentionable but widespread practice. This was brought out clearly during the week of Nov. 17, 1929, when the American Birth Control League held in New York its first general conference in five years. Among the sponsors were women of the highest social standing. The conferees deplored the facts that as yet there are only twenty-nine centers in the United States where birth control information is given, but pointed with satisfaction to recent endorsements of birth control, among which they mentioned those of the Universalist Church, the Congregational Ministers of Connecticut, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis.[15]

Yet notwithstanding all these distressful facts, we shall not venture to decide whether our modern age is more immoral than certain periods of the past. We have met many priests who are convinced that the number of Catholics who are chaste in spite of the rotten environment is very large. It is a hopeful factor in the situation to find priests on the whole quite optimistic with regard to what grace and strong will are still accomplishing among our Catholic people. Still, it is again our priests who admit that there are ominous signs which would indicate that with our Catholic people, too, the old order is changing and is giving place to the new. They note with alarm the statistics that have been published indicating the large number of Catholic women who consult the birth control clinics.[16]

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[14] *Time*, Jan. 6, 1930, p. 58.

[15] *Time*, Dec. 2, 1929, pp. 49-50.

That our young people are realizing the problem that modern immorality is presenting, may be seen from various religious surveys conducted in our Catholic colleges. A survey conducted at Notre Dame University contained the following question: *Have you ever discouraged any of the following weaknesses in other students—drinking? lying? cribbing? impurity? extravagance? effeminacy? ungentlemanliness? vandalism?* Here are the answers received:[17]

Drinking	292
Lying	186
Cribbing	129
Impurity	382
Extravagance	289
Effeminacy	216
Ungentlemanliness	402
Vandalism	224
All of them	14

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[16] Cf. *infra*, p. 100.

[17] *Official Bulletin of the University of Notre Dame*, Oct., 1926, p. 144.

A survey conducted at Villanova College contained this question: *What is the greatest obstacle to your religious progress?* The following replies were received: [18]

Laziness	10
Scrupulousness	3
Myself	5
Indifference	6
Negligence	5
Neglect of Prayer	2
Lack of Will Power	8
A Habit of Sin	7
Sins of Impurity	21
Temptation	7
A Certain Girl	8
Bad Companions	2
Love of "a good time"	6
World artificiality	3

In her informative study on *Religious Instruction in the Catholic High School*[19] Sister Mary Antonina, S.D.P., has produced plentiful evidence that the boys and girls in our Catholic high schools realize the need of instructions on purity and related topics. Of the pupils who answered the Sister's questionnaire, 1,357 boys (91 per cent) and 1,385 girls (95 per cent) listed instructions on purity among the moral topics that have the strongest appeal; 1,346 boys (91 per cent) and 1,355 girls (93 per cent) admitted they needed instructions on "how to meet temptations."

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[18] *Spiritual Searchlights*, Villanova, Pa., 1926, p. 10.
[19] Washington, D. C., 1930, pp. 126-129.

The Sense of Sin Is Gone

The duty of our priests is plain. It will never do for the spiritual leaders of our people to blink at the facts. We must appraise the situation frankly before we can decide on what action must be taken. We believe that the outstanding evil of our age is that our age has lost the sense of sin. Man found the doctrine of sin, whether original or personal, to interfere with his likes and dislikes, with his urges and drives, and hence he simply denies the very concept of sin.

In his life man will always face the problem of choosing between one of two alternatives, either to adjust his life to principles, or to adjust the principles to his life. If he does not practice what he believes, he will end by not believing what he does not practice. Instead of conforming to standards, he makes standards conform to himself. Instead of trying to pass the test, he changes the test. Instead of trying to hold to ideals, he changes the ideals. Instead of accepting the morality demanded by God, he prattles about a new morality based on a statistical study of the way men live.*

The modern world has found the laws of God to interfere with its practices, and hence it has set about to invent a philosophy that will justify its practices. Here we have the source of the naturalism so strongly denounced by Pope Pius XI in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth.* Naturalism denies the doctrine of original sin and declares human nature to be inherently good and without defect. Whatever is desired by human nature is good. The individual is free to choose in accordance with his own wishes and desires. If he is bound at all, it is merely by what will best meet the wishes of the group, which, again, is made up of such as need consult only their only wishes. Man is a law unto himself and need consult no Supreme Being as to what he may do and may not do. The logical conclusion is the doing away with all laws or standards imposed by any authority save by the individual himself. This philosophy is wholly ego-centric and, in its ultimate conclusions, anarchical.

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* Cf. *infra,* pp. 459 ff.

The modern world is giving up not only this standard or that, but all standards as such. This is painfully evident especially in the field of sex, where the modern world no longer recognizes fixed values and standards. The college women quoted above from the Davis study allege purely individual reasons such as health and economic considerations as justifying the crime of contraception. There is no thought of spiritual values or of other-worldly standards. In this attitude the college women reflect the philosophy of the day—irresponsible individualism.

Though the modern world may scorn the Middle Ages, it must admit that the Ages of Faith had at least fixed values and standards. Sex life was seen in proper perspective, and the need of procreation was recognized as the basis of the union of husband and wife. For satisfying the sex urge there was only one medium—marriage—and marriage was sacred, as being a sacrament. Sex intercourse was permitted only to the married, and arbitrary birth restriction was forbidden to the married also. It is true, there were committed in the Middle Ages many offenses against the standard, against marriage. However, every such offense was condemned and stigmatized as a sin.

"In the Middle Ages," says Cardinal Newman, "society sustained the individual, raised him up, and supported him in his higher life. It is society now that drags a man down."

In fact, the world—that is to say, the sum-total of men and women who are slaves of this world—tempts us in many ways to-day: by bad example and perverse maxims; by its reprehensible customs and practices; at one time by gibes, mockery, derision; at another time by flattery, caresses, promises; and again by threats, violence, persecution. Oh, a cunning and powerful tempter is the world! Nor may we overlook the factor of man's own weak nature: "Every man is tempted by his own concupiscence, being drawn away and allured."[20] The Devil, too, is not idle in our day: "Your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour."[21] And who would venture to say that in our day, too, there is not repeated the scene described by Christ in speaking of the man who has succeeded in driving out the unclean spirit? The unclean spirit "goeth and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and entering in they dwell there. And the last state of that man becomes worse than the first."[22] Thus the world, the flesh, and the Devil remain our capital enemies to-day.

However, what would seem to be most characteristic of our day is not the increase in sexual offenses, but the attempt to justify such offenses. There is frank discussion whether marriage is not out of date, and whether it should not therefore be thrown into the discard. Our age is attempting brazenly to do away with the form of marriage, and to set up in its stead the practice of free love. The companionate marriage and the successive polygamy of divorce are forms of free love. We have evidence on all sides of the tendency to acquit the individual of moral responsibility in sex matters. The conditions of to-day—economic and social—are alleged to be such that the individual is practically compelled to abandon former standards of sex morality. He who condemns modern immorality is accused of ignorance of modern conditions. "*Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*—To know all is to pardon all"—is all too popular to-day. There may, indeed, be extenuating circumstances in individual cases, yet even the strongest temptations do not relieve the individual of responsibility for his actions.

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[20] James I, 14.
[21] I Peter V, 8.
[22] Luke XI, 26.

The atmosphere prevailing in much of the modern literature on sex is well expressed by the young man who observed complacently of himself: "I confess I am not moral, but I am hygienic." This literature does not examine into the moral aspects of the problem, but identifies the motives for sexual purity with considerations of physical sanitation. In a former age we find that, despite all the immorality, there was still present the consciousness of being bound by certain standards of morality. In our day, however, the individual has broken away from these standards, and approves only what will pass muster at the bar of his individual reason.

For instance, one of the most popular books on the subject, Dr. Maurice A. Bigelow's *Sex Education*, says concerning the individual's choice between contraception and what the author calls "sexual asceticism":

> Which is moral? This is a question concerning which the individual must weigh his personal views and decide. Only the bigoted victims of arrogance will see immorality in the one who disagrees with him on this question. I insist, then, that if advanced sex education for adults should some day come to involve the problem of contraception, there will be no conflict between hygienic knowledge and ethics, if the teaching leads to more perfect adjustment of sex and life.[23]

Mrs. Hollingworth offers in her book, *The Psychology of the Adolescent*,[24] a similarly easy way to solve what she calls the hard problems of theology: "Perhaps the only possible solution will be the development of personal religion, each thinker building for himself whatever system of ethics and whatever explanation of life he may be able to devise and adopt emotionally."

We perceive that with both authors it is the individual who is permitted to make the adjustment between sex and life. There is no thought given to the Eternal Law imposed by the Creator that must govern human conduct in these matters. The old law with its strict, "Thou mayst not" has given way to the new concession, "Thou mayst do it" provided there are no social complications to follow. The bulk of the literature that deals with the morals of the young confirms what one writer observes of the talks he has heard on the subject of sex hygiene. He never gets the impression that what the young people are warned against might be forbidden on grounds other than mere sanitation. The impression that one takes away from these talks is that the only consideration that carries any weight is that "sexual excesses" are unsanitary and unhygienic. The very terminology reflects the philosophy of the speakers and writers. There is no question of sin or vice, but we hear a great deal about "indiscretions," "excesses," "lapses," "sex practices," "sex experiences," "sex problems," "sex play," and so forth.

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[23] New York, 1924, p. 220.
[24] New York, 1928, p. 162.

Pope Pius XI diagnosed the situation correctly when he declared that God and His Law are discarded by too many educators:

> Alas! it is clear from the obvious meaning of their words and from experience that what is intended by not a few is the withdrawal of education from every sort of dependence on the divine law. So to-day we see, strange sight indeed, educators and philosophers who spend their lives in searching for a universal moral code of education, as if there existed no Decalogue, no Gospel Law, no law even of nature stamped by God upon the heart of man, promulgated by right reason, and codified by God Himself in the Ten Commandments. These innovators are wont to refer contemptuously to Christian education as "heteronomous," "passive," "obsolete," because founded upon the authority of God and His Holy Laws.[25]

HOW SHALL WE SAFEGUARD OUR YOUNG PEOPLE?

These are the views prevailing generally to-day. How shall we train our people—young and old—to withstand their influence? Our age has justly been characterized as one in which the temptations have grown enormously from without while many of the defenses from within have disappeared entirely. Jules Payot remarks in his book, *L'éducation de la volonté,*[26] that prior to the eighteenth century it was customary to remind people of their duties, and in this way continual appeals were made to the will, which thus tended to grow strong. In more modern times, however, it became the fashion to speak only of rights and of so-called autonomy. Humanity thus entered upon an age of general laxity, weakness of will, and lack of central purpose. The much-lauded autonomy has so far resulted in giving us the rights of self, but not the government of self. The modern world has witnessed an extraordinary weakening of backbone, a remarkable diminution in the ability to resist external temptations. In the phrase of Fénelon, man has become like a candle burning in a draught. This modern weakness of will is doubtless largely to blame for the disastrous instability of the new generation when confronted with the temptations of the flesh. Many fine words have been coined for the purpose of covering up this weakness. Those who are unable to deny themselves a single wish, are only too glad to discover such a high-sounding phrase as "The right of self-government," or "the need of self-expression." There are lurid descriptions of the disastrous results of repressing any urge because of the absolute need of universal sex-expression. On the other hand, there is great unwillingness to face the fact that really great and superabundant life-energy as represented at its best in the saints has invariably chosen manly self-discipline as the symbol and expression of its concentrated force.[27]

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[25] *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*, p. 22.

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[26] Paris, 1922.

[27] Cf. F. W. Foerster, *Marriage and the Sex Problem*, New York, pp. 173-174.

The education advocated by the world at large is in keeping with this modern philosophy. At the opening meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association on Jan. 5, 1926, Msgr. E. A. Pace reminded his hearers that every system of education is simply a philosophy in action, and hence the present-day educational theory and practice is in no small degree an exhibition and also a test of the prevailing philosophy. It therefore is a true saying, commonplace as it may be, that our hope of remedy for present evils and of a wholesome national life for the future depends largely, if not chiefly, upon education.

However, some competent authorities declare that American education has not only failed of its purpose as a producer of good citizenship but is also responsible for the increase of lawlessness. Consequently it is necessary to ascertain the reason for the failure, and this reason undoubtedly lies deeper down than any defect of organization, curriculum or method of instruction. It is to be sought and found in the philosophical principles which underlie all education.

To offset the new morality of naturalism, we may not rely upon any "form of pedagogic naturalism which in any way excludes or weakens the supernatural Christian formation in the teaching of youth. Every method of education founded, wholly or in part, on the denial or forgetfulness of original sin and grace, and relying on the sole powers of human nature is unsound."[28]

If we would train our young people in chastity to-day, we must make plain to them that the Christian moral law is based on solid grounds. We must so instruct them in our holy Religion that their faith will be "a reasonable service."[29] We must make plain to them the sweet reasonableness of the elementary truths of Religion, such as God's commandments and His providence over mankind, the immortality of the soul, the accountability of every man before God, the evil of sin, and the infinite love of Our Heavenly Father. It is these elementary truths that are all ignored and swept aside by the new morality of naturalism.

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[28] *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*, p. 21.

There is so much sophistry abroad that it will not suffice for the Catholic educator to deal in platitudes, or to lay down dogmatically the requirements of Christian ethics; he must be at pains to explain the logic and the sound philosophy of the moral law. But knowledge is not sufficient. The Catholic educator must provide also a process of training that will strengthen the will. Yet, unaided, the will is unequal to the requirements of the moral law, and hence the Catholic educator must avail himself of the supernatural aids of religion to support the will.

Here we have in a nutshell the complete training in chastity that has been traditional in the Church. Our study will attempt to outline how this traditional policy should be adapted to meet the needs of the present day. While chiefly intent upon this positive objective, we cannot ignore the persistent and widespread efforts of the many writers and educationists who urge sex instruction for our children collectively and indiscriminately, and who disregard the supernatural element that we know to be essential to proper training in chastity.

[29] Rom. XII, 1.

CHAPTER II

WHEN WAS SEX INSTRUCTION FIRST INTRODUCED INTO THE SCHOOLS?

The vast bulk of the literature on sex education ignores the past. The reader might almost get the impression that the problem is so new that it had never been dealt with before. However, it is necessary to remember that the problem of sex is as old as the race, and that there are no new pleasures and no new sins. For this reason it might be well to look back upon the past experiences of the race in dealing with the problem. Our survey will necessarily be brief, but we shall be on the lookout for what may assist us in dealing with the subject to-day.

The second and third chapters of the Book of Genesis are frank in dealing with the subject of sex, and that frankness is characteristic of the whole Bible, including both the Old and the New Testament. However, there was always a realization of the danger of sex knowledge coming to the young before they were ready for it, and hence we find in the Old Law the rule that those who had not reached the age of maturity and discretion were not permitted to read the beginning of Genesis, a part of Ezechiel, and the Canticle of Canticles.

The general tone of Greek and Roman literature creates the impression that there was certainly no prudishness in sex matters in ancient Greece and Rome. In the first part of the seventh book of his

Laws, Plato recommends that girls, especially when they grow more mature, be instructed with regard to the bearing and rearing of children. Plato wished it to be matter of law that the younger married women be instructed in the subject by older matrons selected for the purpose.

The frankness of the Old Law was continued in the New. Christ spoke quite naturally, for instance, Matthew XV, 11 and 20; Mark VII, 19. The Blessed Virgin, too, is direct and naturally simple in her reply to the Archangel Gabriel: "How can this be since I know not man?" When we remember the special meaning attached to the word "know," we realize all the more the naturalness of her reply. The Irish priest-author of *Quid vobis videtur?*[1] comments: "She spoke no prudery for she knew no sin," and asks pertinently: "What would so-called society think of this reply? Would it deem it sufficiently modest?" The same writer continues:

> And as for St. Elizabeth's salutation, "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb," suppose that those words were removed from their context in the Hail Mary, and suppose they were spoken at a modern tea party, during a lull in the gossip, what would be thought of St. Elizabeth? . . . Would not St. Elizabeth be described as a coarse, vulgar woman, and would not her words bring burning blushes to the cheeks of all present, particularly to the cheeks of those who, in their inmost heart, had no very special regard for the angelic virtue?

St. Paul is likewise frank. His own frankness in denouncing whatever vices he wishes to single out may assist us in interpreting that passage from his letter to the Ephesians[2] that has been quoted often in condemnation of all frank speech: "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not so much as be named among you, as becometh saints; or obscenity or foolish talking, or scurrility, which is to no purpose; but rather giving of thanks."

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[1] Dublin, 1923, pp. 18-19.

St. Paul cannot wish to convey the meaning that the things enumerated should not be named, for he himself names them frequently throughout his Epistles.[3] Again, if the meaning were that these things should not be named, why should avarice and cupidity be included? Theophylactus interprets the passage as implying that the Ephesians should not discuss these subjects as topics for recreation, since joking about forbidden things may prepare the way for forbidden actions. Professor Paul Ewald interprets the instruction to demand that the Christians should be so pure in their lives that there may not be among them even a rumor or gossip of such deeds performed by Christians.[4]

Because of certain objections that had been made to passages of Scripture, an expurgated edition of the Bible was issued in London, in 1929, by the National Sunday School Union. Among the changes of phrase that are noted is that the invitation to Joseph by Potiphar's wife is translated: "His master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph and tempted him to do evil." In the story of the Prodigal Son, "evil companions" is substituted for the word "harlots," which occurs in the King James Version. Perhaps the most surprising change is that St. John's account of Christ's treatment of the woman taken in adultery is omitted. Dr. James J. Walsh comments: "It would be hard to say under those circumstances what to do with the Ten Commandments, and it is very evident that such finickiness can only do harm and not good."

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[2] V, 3-4.

[3] For instance, in the following passages quoted in the *Catechism of the Council of Trent:* I Thess. IV, 3; I Cor. VI, 18; I Cor. V, 9; I Cor. VI, 9; I Cor. VI, 18; 2 Cor. VII. 1; I Cor. VI, 15-16.

[4] Joseph Knabenbauer, S.J., *Commentarius in S. Pauli Epistolas IV Apostoli ad Ephesios, ad Philippenses et ad Colossenses,* Paris, 1912, p. 143.

If we bear in mind the frankness of the pagan classics, we realize that in the early Church the youths received quite an amount of sex instruction in the pagan schools which they attended and where they read the books dealing with Greek and Roman mythology. The Fathers, too, were frank in their sermons, letters, and other writings. Methodius and Augustine are unabashed in their books written for consecrated women and in which they speak without prudishness of the sexual life while extolling the beauty of the life dedicated to virginity.[5]

St. Augustine gives us a hint of the solicitude of his mother when he arrived at puberty: "She desired, and, I remember, privately warned me, with great solicitude not to commit fornication; but, above all things, never to defile another man's wife. These appeared to me but womanish counsels, which I should blush to obey. But they were Thine and I knew it not." Continuing in the eighth paragraph of the same chapter,[6] the Saint tells us that his mother's counsels on chastity were most explicit. What St. Monica did for St. Augustine, every Christian mother may do for her son with perfect propriety.

Anyone familiar with Patristic literature knows that the Fathers of the Church were not prudish in their public or private utterances. An incident that is often related is that of St. John Chrysostom in his Twelfth Homily on St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians. The Saint, in commenting on the Scriptural text "They shall be two in one flesh," spoke very freely of the marital relations and of their significance and sacredness. In fact, he employed language which no preacher would dare to use at the present day. Some of the Saint's hearers blushed, whereupon the great preacher turned on them, and having quoted the words of St. Paul, "Marriage is honorable and the bed undefiled," he continued: "Why art thou ashamed of what is honorable; why blushest thou at what is undefiled. That some are ashamed of St. Paul's language is to be traced to impurity."[7]

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[5] Mausbach, *Die katholische Moral*, Cologne, 1902, p. 45.

[6] Bk. II, *Confessions.*

John Cassian, a disciple of St. John Chrysostom, offers detailed and specific information with regard to training in chastity as well as on the subject of health education.* Tertullian, too, in his work, *De cultu feminarum*, writes in a refreshingly modern manner on the foibles of women. Other Christian writers who offer material on the present subject are Lactantius, in his *Divinarum institutionum libri VII*, and Sedulius, in his letter to his grandson on the studies of boyhood.

Towards the end of the fifth century, we are told by Julianus Pomerius[8] that the rule obtaining among the Jews of old was again enforced, and that youths were forbidden to read the book of Genesis, a section of the Prophet Ezechiel, the Canticle of Canticles, and similar books in which were recounted the acts of generation and the actions and names of certain women . . . "lest they, being carnal, conceive these spiritual matters in a carnal sense and, instead of meditating on the virtues symbolized by these women, they suffer harm by considering them with fleshly thoughts."

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[7] *The Homilies of St. John Chrysostom on the Epistles of St. Paul to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians*, Oxford, 1843, p. 330.

* *De coenobiorum institutis*, lib. VI, c. 15; *Collatio II*, de discretione, c. XXIII; *Collatio XXII*, de nocturnis illusionibus; *Collatio XII*, de castitate, c. VIII, IX, and X; *Liber VI*, de spiritu fornicationis, c. XI, XIII, XIV.

[8] *De vita contemplativa*. L. 3, c. 6 (M. 59, 483).

In the tenth century Hroswitha, a nun and the first German poetess, wrote dramas whose theme is sensual love. The pious nun treats the delicate subject on a high moral plane, and displays skill in demonstrating the principle that the greater be the force of temptation the more admirable is the final triumph of virtue.[9] In the twelfth century we see St. Hildegarde, a nun, writing of sex life and its corruption through original sin in a way that would bring instant censure from many good souls upon a Catholic writer if indulged in to-day. Indeed, she used some of the "facts of life" as serenely for expressing her pious visions, such as that of the aspirants for Baptism, quite as we now use flowers and sunsets and other such undeniably decorous images.[10] Certain medieval saints, as St. Bernardine of Siena and St. Vincent Ferrer, did not beat about the bush in denouncing to their hearers the grossness of their lives.

It is worthy of note that during all these centuries we come across no trace that priests, parents, or teachers ever realized the need of *formal* sex instruc-

[9] Cf. Baumgartner, *Geschichte der Weltliteratur*, Freiburg, 1925, IV, pp. 339-353.

[10] Schmelzeis, *Leben und Wirken der hl. Hildegardis*, Freiburg, 1879, pp. 497ff.

tion. It may be that the warning expressed by the *Catechism of the Council of Trent* indicated a tendency at the time on the part of some to expect much help from rather full and detailed enlightenment. But the warning given by Mother Church was heeded, and Catholic practice, as described succinctly by Silvio Antoniano, continued the tradition of the previous centuries: reticence with regard to children, but on the other hand no holding back when it was necessary to speak plainly.

First Mention of Sex Instruction

Even a hundred years after the publication of the Roman Catechism there is no mention of the subject of sex instruction. Fénelon does not touch on the subject in his *Traité de l'éducation des filles*,[11] nor is there any mention of the subject in the *Lettres* of the celebrated educator Madame de Maintenon. However, in the eighteenth century Rousseau tells us in his *Emile* [12] that at his time the question was often asked whether it be better to answer the questions of children inquiring about sex matters, or to deceive them by harmless deceptions. Rousseau himself is of the opinion that it is expedient for both the mind and the body of the child that he become sex-conscious as late as possible. Hence he advises that parents put off their children when they ask the first questions, but that they should never tell them lies. The answer, if found to be necessary, should be simple, brief, and definite. However, in case there was danger of the child's getting the sex information from an improper

[11] First published in 1687.

[12] I, 4.

source before he was sixteen, he was to be instructed in sex matters before he was ten.

The so-called Philanthropinists in Germany were under the influence of Rousseau and began to write on the subject at the time: Basedow, Campe, and Salzmann proposed sex instruction as a remedy for the corrupt morals of the young.

Basedow (d. 1790) discusses the subject in all his pedagogical works, but especially in his *Elementary Book*. He advocates general sex instruction and has no fear even of grossness in the form:

> We ought to discuss the subjects of procreation, pregnancy and birth with young children, at least before they are ten or twelve. These subjects should be discussed truthfully, seriously, but without too much attention to details. But here, too, as in dealing with other natural things, we should not neglect the matter of the Providence of God. Care must be taken to use the proper terms in order to acquaint the children with these subjects in a proper way. If we were to attempt to keep the knowledge of these facts of life away from the children, we should probably find that the children would discover the truth without the knowledge of their elders, and such discovery would arouse their further curiosity in a harmful way. They would discuss among themselves these dangerous subjects, and disastrous consequences would be inevitable.

Basedow's associate, Wolke, went beyond these instructions of the master. Campe (d. 1818) discusses the subject of sex instruction only incidentally in his writings. But the matter is treated very fully in the book that was brought out under his direction: *Survey of the System of Education*. This book offers a plea for early private instruction of those who are not yet initiated, especially in case they are being brought up in an environment that lacks the necessary safeguards. But in case there is evidence of corruption among the young, the instruction is to be given in public.

There is nobody but will approve of the sex education advocated by Pestalozzi (d. 1827) in his book *Leonard and Gertrude*, first published in 1781, in which he describes and approves Arner's system.

> Arner's method of counteracting every species of sexual laxity consisted in giving a careful training in orderliness and thoughtfulness *before* the sex feelings had come into being. In the case of such training we should expect that the sex instinct when it arrived upon the scene, found a home in perfect order and discipline, with a master capable of training the new inmate in a manner corresponding to the character of the household, and able to put it in its proper place should it show any sign of insubordination.

Doctors, too, took up the subject of sex instruction at the time. Among the medical leaders of the movement we meet Tissot, a physician of Lucerne, as well as Christian F. Boerner, S. G. Vogel, Peter Frank, and P. Ch. Faust. These men wrote on the subject of the physical results of "sexual excesses" and insisted that the young be warned about these dangers and instructed in sex matters generally.

The Protestant theologian Ch. G. Salzmann (d. 1811) recommends in his famous *Book on Ants* that the young be instructed early about the origin of life. But in another book of his, *On Youth's Sins of Sensuality*, he would seem to recommend only indirect instruction. Other Protestant theologians were even more conservative in the matter.

The Catholic theologians of the time barely broached the subject. Among the Catholic leaders of the time we may mention Bernard Overberg (d. 1826), John Michael Sailer (d. 1832), and Aegidius Jais (d. 1822). Jais treated the subject of chastity in the traditional Catholic way in his booklet *Important Points for Parents and Teachers in Training the Young in Chastity.* Perhaps the largest concession made by any Catholic theologian of the period is that of John Baptist Hirscher (d. 1865), who demands in his *Katechetik*, first published in 1831, that catechumens and all young people be given clear, satisfying, and modest instruction in sex matters, because the less insight they have into the high meaning of the sexual, the more readily will they fall; and the greater their knowledge of, and enthusiasm for, the sexual as being a sublime creation of God's wisdom and grace, the less liable they are to sin. Hirscher regrets that "false fear and shame should keep educators from setting forth clearly the holy phases of a subject while hoodlums expose and flaunt its unholy aspects at every street corner."

The movement of the Philanthropinists was of short duration and produced no permanent results. The aberrations in the direction of sex instruction were eventually discredited along with so many other vagaries of the period of Enlightenment. For an excellent historical and critical study of the subject, the reader should turn to Thalhofer's *Die Sexuelle Pädagogik bei den Philanthropen.*[13]

The failure of the Philanthropinists was due to several causes. For one thing, they were too bold in their demands. Some of their leaders demanded that

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[13] Kempten, 1907.

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charts be displayed in the schoolroom to show how children are born. Others even went so far as to suggest that the children be present when babies are born in order that they might grow serious-minded in the matter by seeing the anguish and the blood, and so forth. A further reason for the failure of the movement was the fact that most of the leaders ignored the religious factor that is so essential for the training in chastity. However, while the vast majority of the Philanthropinists seemed to feel with Socrates that "ignorance is the only sin" and that everything could be accomplished by imparting sex knowledge, there were some few who still believed that religion and prayer constitute essential elements. A book published in Leipzig in 1794[14] instructs the father to impart the sex information to his children to the accompaniment of prayers to be said in common.

But no matter what may have been the reason for the failure of the movement, the subject was not touched upon for a hundred years, or as one writer puts it, it took the world a hundred years to recover from the shock. In fact, the reaction was one of extreme prudishness. In view of the charge brought so often against the Church to-day that she is reactionary in opposing class instruction in sex matters, it is interesting to remember that not so long ago the Catholic catechism instruction was said to be a means of corrupting the young. Dr. James J. Walsh has recently[15] called attention to a book that was popular in New England in the 1880's and which complained that the ordinary questions and answers of the Catechism with regard to the Sixth and Ninth Commandments are sex suggestions of the most serious kind:

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[14] *Briefe über die wichtigsten Gegenstände der Menschheit*, pp. 100ff.

[15] *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, Jan., 1930, pp. 350-351.

> Do not questions like the following, taken from the Boston Catechism, lead to licentiousness?
>
> *Questions:* What is forbidden by the Sixth Commandment?
> "Thou shalt not commit adultery."
> What else?
> "All other kinds of immodesties, by kisses, touches, looks, words, and actions."
> What is the Ninth Commandment?
> "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife."
> What is forbidden by this?
> "All lustful thoughts and desires, and all wilful pleasures in the irregular motions of concupiscence."
>
> Do not questions like the foregoing, asked of children less than fourteen years in the school, and multiplied a hundredfold by the priest in the confessional, lead to lust and make the Church, what it always has been in every nation where it has complete control, the hotbed of licentiousness, enemy of legal divorce, yet the conniver of the most flagrant concubinage that ever cursed the civilized world?

Aside from the obvious prejudice, the passage is characteristic of the prudishness that prevailed for a long time. However, towards the end of the nineteenth century there was a return of the spirit of the Enlightenment. Students of history are aware that the spirit of the modern age has very much in common with the spirit of the Enlightenment—the intellectualism and individualism of the latter are our outstanding present-day characteristics—and consequently we find to-day much of the eighteenth century disparagement of what was called "a conspiracy of silence in sex matters.'' Throughout our modern literature there is much pooh-poohing of what is called Victorian prudishness and the hush-hush policy regarding sex matters. Modern readers are told that Lady Gough writing in 1863 on ''Etiquette'' insisted: ''The perfect hostess will see to it that the works of male and female authors be properly separated on her bookshelves. Their proximity unless they happen to be married should not be tolerated.''[16] Mr. John W. Coutts, in his book *The Church and the Sex Question,*[17] tells us of ''the monstrous suggestion of a firm of publishers that Huxley should produce a textbook on physiology for schools and carefully leave out any mention of the method by which human life is reproduced. The male grossness of Falstaff and the female directness of Juliet were equally alien to Victorian literature. The underlying theory in literature and in life was that sex was an impolite subject, that the less that was said about it the better, that there must be some inherent vulgarity about those who sought exact knowledge on such a theme.''

Sex Instruction in the Twentieth Century

But the modern educationists who took up the matter of sex instruction in the schools found no fault whatever with the methods of the Philanthropinists, but traced their failure to the untoward conditions of the time. For instance, Marie Lischnewska, one of the most radical writers on the subject, approves[18] the policy of the Philanthropinists, and contends that they failed because they were too far in advance of their age, that the viewpoint of science had not yet begun to take a firm hold, "that the asceticism of the Church still wielded too strong a sway," but that at the present time we are ready for the teachings of the eighteenth century reformers, and that for several reasons. First, we now have universal elementary education, and hence the tone of the masses has been raised. Furthermore, our educational philosophy has abandoned the narrow individualistic viewpoint for that of the sociological. Also, the urgent need of the day calls for protection against venereal diseases, and the congestion in our modern cities necessitates that some safeguards be provided.

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[16] *Journal of Social Hygiene,* March, 1929, p. 162.

[17] London, n.d., p. 22.

[18] *Die geschlechtliche Belehrung der Kinder*, Berlin, 1906, pp. 8ff.

There is a vast difference, however, in the motive that inspired the Philanthropinists in their pleading for sexual enlightenment. What they wished to prevent was what they called "sexual excesses," because of their direct effect upon the organism. But this aim, while not neglected by the moderns, is subsidiary to what was one of the chief objects of those who pioneered present-day sex education, namely, the prevention of venereal diseases. At the time of the Philanthropinists, the teachers touched, of course, upon the subject of the sex life of the child. But this was done incidentally, for when instruction was given on sex life, not the actual experience of children, but the sex life of mature persons was the subject of discourse. This was true also of the work of those physicians who, like Hufeland in his *Makrobiotik*[19] (written as a sequel to Tissot's book), spoke of the dangers of self-abuse.

It is characteristic of our intellectualistic age, which over-emphasizes the knowledge element in education, that the chief stress should be placed upon sex instruction. Significantly, too, the movement for sex instruction had its origin in Germany, where there is always apt to be an exaggeration of the knowledge factor, and it is there, too, where the extreme advocates of sex instruction have been found. When Dr. F. W. Foerster came out against the extremists, Professor Frederick Paulsen, of the University of Berlin, welcomed him "as one who was sober amid a mob of raving maniacs."[20] The Convention of the Women Teachers of Prussia, held at Cassel in 1904, declared in favor of sex instruction in the elementary schools.

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[19] Jena, 1798.

The movement, however, was by no means confined to Germany. The Second International Congress of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis, held at Brussels in 1902, passed a resolution urging teachers to take up the subject of sex instruction in the schools. In France Senator Bérenger and Professor Fournier founded the *Société de prévoyance sanitaire et morale*, one of the purposes of which was to make sex instruction a part of the curriculum in the higher grades of public schools. The plan was given enthusiastic support by the Masonic Orders—the Masonic Review, *l'Acacia*, April, 1910, describing it as "*notre belle doctrine maçonnique.*"[21] The National Committee of Propaganda, Social Hygiene and Prophylactic Education, organized in 1920 under the direction of Dr. Pinard, has centralized French endeavor with regard to the matter. In 1922 the Society of School Physicians of Paris appointed a committee to study the question of sex instruction in the schools. In 1923 an inquiry was instituted among the various associations whose membership is made up of the teachers in the secondary schools. They agreed that sex instruction is incumbent on the family as such; and since it has been established that, for various reasons, most parents fail to perform their duty in this respect, some of the associations of parents held that the schools should be asked to take over the task.[22]

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[20] *Moderne Erziehung und geschlechtliche Sittlichkeit*, Berlin, 1908, p. 54.

[21] *Catholic Educational Association Bulletin*, Feb., 1914, p. 7.

The national government of Belgium inaugurated a campaign against venereal diseases shortly after the World War. An effort was made to co-ordinate all social forces and to establish a healthier sexual morality. It was thought essential to create a public opinion on the important question of the elimination of venereal diseases. The Queen of Belgium, with the aid of Cardinal Mercier, gave impetus to this work.[23] It was upon the Queen's suggestion that the National League against the Venereal Peril was established in Brussels in October, 1922. At the first conference there were discussed, among other subjects, the moral development of youth and the anti-venereal propaganda in the schools. In 1924 the educational league, *Ligue de l'enseignement*, in a resolution adopted by an assembly of physicians and teachers, held that it would be advisable to organize systematic courses of instruction adapted to the age of the pupils, to prepare them to understand the physical and moral importance of reproduction.

In Italy the problem of sex education was considered as early as 1902. Since that time efforts have frequently been made to encourage the teaching of sex hygiene in the schools. The plan formulated is to have the Minister of Hygiene introduce such courses in technical and secondary schools. The national congress of the Italian Society for the Study of Sex Questions, held in 1924 in Naples, stressed the necessity of introducing proper legislation for the betterment of the future generation.

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[22] Cf. *supra*, pages xxi-xxv.

[23] Gatterer-Krus, *Educating to Purity*, New York, 1927, p. 143.

In England sex education was stressed in 1923 by the National Birth-Rate Commission, appointed by the National Council of Public Morals. The Commission was convinced by the evidence heard that, however delicate and difficult the task, sex education cannot, with due regard to the moral safety and welfare of youth, be shirked. Instruction should be given whenever curiosity appears, or when there is any indication that bad habits are being formed. There was a general agreement that the duty rests first of all with the parents. The Minister of Education believed that while detailed teaching of sex hygiene was not feasible in public elementary schools, much might be done by the training colleges, and that individual advice was a duty which at any time might fall upon the teacher.[24]

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[24] For most of the historical data presented on pp. 37-39 as well as for the opinions quoted we are indebted to Dr. D. M. O. Robinson, Assistant Surgeon, U. S. Public Health Service, author of ''The Progress of Sex Education Programs in Foreign Countries,'' in: *Sex Education*, Washington, D. C., 1927.

CHAPTER III

EXPERIMENTING WITH SEX INSTRUCTION IN THE SCHOOLS

In Europe the sex instruction movement has been concerned chiefly with spreading information concerning the social diseases. The Second International Congress of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis, held at Brussels in 1902, recommended that in all countries there should be established sanitary, social, moral, and legal societies for the prophylaxis of these diseases. As a result of this recommendation, prophylactic societies were formed in France, Germany, Italy, Holland, and the United States. Of these, the German Society for the Prevention of Venereal Diseases became the strongest, with over five thousand members and twenty branch societies.

In the United States we may trace the beginning of the movement for sex instruction to the founding of the American Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis on Feb. 9, 1905, under the leadership of Dr. Prince A. Morrow. It is significant for both the Society and its founder that Dr. Maurice A. Bigelow, in dedicating his book *Sex Education* to Dr. Morrow, says of him that his "great faith in the essential goodness of human nature led him to believe that the problems of sex have arisen from ignorance and that education is the key to their solution."

It is interesting to contrast with this view the judgment expressed by Pope Pius XI in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*:[1]

> Such persons grievously err in refusing to recognize the inborn weakness of human nature, and the law of which the Apostle speaks,[2] fighting against the law of the mind; and also in ignoring the experience of facts, from which it is clear that, particularly in young people, evil practices are the effect not so much of ignorance of intellect as of weakness of a will exposed to dangerous occasions, and unsupported by the means of grace.

Dr. Bigelow also makes it plain that the Society was organized primarily to meet sanitary ends. Indeed, he is frank enough to say that if it had been organized to meet moral ends, the Society would have attracted little attention from the American public.

At first the Society was largely confined to New York, many independent state and city societies being organized within a few years after the original social hygiene society in New York. This multiplication of societies called attention to the need of a national organization, and in 1910 the various societies were affiliated in the American Federation for Sex Hygiene. Dr. Morrow was the leading spirit in the Federation until his death. In 1913, the Federation and the American Vigilance Association (a society especially concerned with the social evil) were united with the American Social Hygiene Association. Its offices now are at 370 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.

WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION TO THE FIRST EXPERIMENTS

The founding of these social hygiene societies led to the suggestion of introducing the subject of sex instruction into the schools. On July 20, 1912, the National Education Association passed a resolution favoring training of teachers with the view, ultimately, of sex instruction in schools. In 1913, at the invitation of the Fourth International Congress of School Hygiene, which met at Buffalo, N. Y., the American Federation for Sex Hygiene arranged a session devoted to the discussion of sex education as a school program. Though there was at the time much discussion of sex problems, the general public was opposed to introducing the subject into the schools. This opposition of the public is reflected in the Resolution passed in July, 1914, by the National Education Association at its Convention in Minneapolis:

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[1] P. 23

[2] Rom. VII, 23.

> The Association, reaffirming its belief in the constructive value of education in sex hygiene, directs attention to the grave dangers, ethical and social, arising out of a sex consciousness stimulated by undue emphasis upon sex problems and sex relations. The situation is so serious as to render neglect hazardous. *The Association urges upon all parents the obvious duty of parental care and instruction in such matters and directs attention to the mistake of leaving such problems exclusively to the school.*[3] The Association believes that sex hygiene should be approached in the public schools conservatively, under the direction of persons qualified by scientific training and teaching experience, in order to assure a safe moral point of view. The Association therefore recommends that institutions preparing teachers give attention to such subjects as would qualify for instruction in the general field of morals as well as in the particular field of sex hygiene.

Dr. Bigelow, who quotes the above Resolution in his *Sex Education*,[4] gives much attention to some of the many criticisms current at the time. He quotes Miss Agnes Repplier, Mr. Cosmo Hamilton, Dr. Richard C. Cabot, Superintendent Maxwell, of New York City, and the late ex-President Taft, as being opposed to the movement. The action taken by the Board of Education of Chicago was characteristic of the attitude in many places. In July, 1913, the Board of Education ordered courses in sex hygiene to be given in the high schools of the city but, moved largely by the force of public opinion, it decided, less than three months after the introduction of the teaching, to discontinue the subject.[5] Governor Dunne, of Illinois, expressed his strong opposition in a letter he addressed in December, 1913, to President James, of the University of Illinois:

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[3] Italics ours. [4] New York, 1916, pp. 232-233.

> I would not permit my young and innocent daughters to be sent to either a public or private school where sex hygiene is discussed in public. I honestly fear that if sex hygiene be taught in schools, and young boys and girls in the open classroom are made aware of things which may be taught in the line of sex hygiene, it probably will create in their young minds a prurient curiosity which will induce, rather than suppress, immorality and unchastity.[6]

The educational press, too, was not always enthusiastic. Witness, for instance, the statement of the *Educational Review*:

> We deplore more than we can say the vulgarizing of matters of personal conduct and morality, and we are convinced that the discussion of what is called sex hygiene

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[5] *Catholic Educational Association Bulletin*, Feb., 1914, p. 7.

[6] *Pittsburgh Observer*, Dec. 18, 1913. Cf. *Fortnightly Review* (St. Louis), XXI (1914), p. 121, for a similar condemnation of sex instruction in the schools of Los Angeles.

> in schools and in drawing rooms will have no effect but an evil one. Every time we see a new textbook on this subject we find additional evidence in support of this contention.[7]

The leaders of the Social Hygiene Association likewise deplored much of what was done at the time. Dr. Edward L. Keyes, who is now (1930) President of the Association, said at its 1915 Convention in reference to the matter of teaching sex hygiene in the schools:

> The immediate results have, of course, been freakish. We have already seen the failure of the attempt at teaching sex hygiene in the public schools to children who knew nothing of the subject by teachers who seemingly had not even the wit to guess what the children did know.[8]

The attitude of American Catholics was well brought out in two essays published in the *Bulletin of the Catholic Educational Association*,[9] "The Catholic Church and the Sex Problem" by the Rev. Richard H. Tierney, S.J., and "Instruction in Sex Hygiene" by the Rev. Dr. John W. Melody, Professor of Moral Theology at the Catholic University of America. Both essays expressed uncompromising opposition to the various attempts made at the time to introduce sex instruction into the schools. "The Teaching of Sex Hygiene in Our Schools" by the Rev. Francis Heiermann, S.J., first published in the medical journal *The Lancet-Clinic*, of Cincinnati, and reprinted by the Central Bureau of the German Roman Catholic Central Verein,[10] offers a good sum-

[7] Nov., 1914, p. 425.

[8] *Social Hygiene*, Jan., 1916, p. 49.

[9] Vol. X, No. 2 (Feb., 1914).

[10] St. Louis, 1914.

mary of the arguments advanced at the time by non-Catholics and Catholics against the movement.

A small card addressed to boys and copyrighted in 1914 by Albert B. Mowry, M.D., of Chicago, illustrates the kind of sex instruction that was at that time not offensive to the general public. The Doctor advises the boys in carefully veiled language to beware of the danger of contracting "bad diseases," not to attempt liberties with "good, sweet girls." The concluding advice is characteristic: "Be a manly man. Play much in the air and sunshine, and be happy."

The World War—the Turning Point

However, with the entrance of our country into the World War, conditions changed, as it were, overnight. The draft revealed the prevalence of venereal disease among the civilian population, and measures were taken not only to protect the enlisted men but also to safeguard the general public. G. Stanley Hall said in 1921: "The War served as an object lesson to bring the significance of sex home to every community as no other event in history has done." The War opened the eyes of the nation to the fact that sex diseases lurked in most unsuspected places. On examination it was proved that thousands of young men were unfit for service because of sex disease.

Dr. Howard B. Woolston has described how the circumstances attending the entrance of the United States into the World War brought home to the American people as nothing in our previous history has ever done, the menace of prostitution and venereal diseases to the young manhood of the country. Conditions along the Mexican border during the years just preceding the War had shown the possibilities of organized activities as promoters of morale. Reports made by Dr. Max Exner, then of the International Board, Y.M.C.A., and Mr. Raymond Fosdick, of the Bureau of Social Hygiene, showed not only the ancient menace to our men in uncontrolled camp surroundings, but also pointed out lines along which progress could be made. The necessity for a physically fit army led our government to steps never before undertaken by a nation in arms. The Commission on Training Camp Activities, uniting as it did with special departments of the offices of the Surgeon General of both the Army and the Navy, and of the Public Health Service, conducted a campaign to this end that extended to every camp community in the United States and France.

The Division of Venereal Diseases was created in the Public Health Service, and in 1918 Congress established the interdepartmental Social Hygiene Board and appropriated four million dollars for a period of two years. There were three phases to the activity of this Board: medical, legal and educational. By means of an organization built up through cooperation with each of the forty-eight state departments of health, a standardized concerted movement for sex education was possible. The annual reports of the United States Public Health Service disclose the fact that since 1918 there were held under the joint auspices of the Public Health Service, the United States Bureau of Education, and the state departments of health fifty-three regional conferences on the subject of health education. In 1922 a twelve-reel motion picture film, entitled *The Science of Life*, was prepared for the purpose of further interesting schools and teachers in this activity. This film was shown at approximately fifty lectures delivered by representatives of the division of venereal diseases. These lectures were attended by more than 150,000 high school students. State departments of health, schools, and other organizations borrowed or purchased copies of this film. The direct result of these conferences and lectures was a widespread interest among school officials and educators and the instituting of measures for the inclusion of sex instruction in the curriculum.

There are those who believe that the universal fear of the social diseases aroused by the nation-wide propaganda was an important factor, along with the general hysteria of the World War, in getting the subject of sex instruction into our public schools. Americans have naturally much faith in education, and hence it is not surprising that many people expected sex instruction to prove the most effective means for protecting our young people from the menace of the dread diseases. We believe that the leaders in the movement for sex education had faith in what they advocated, and they themselves realized that much of what was done during the War was done in the nature of emergency measures. Also, we must acknowledge the fact that they disapproved of the efforts made in our country during the period of 1912-1914 to have sex hygiene taught as a separate subject in our schools. During the period of 1919-1930 we find the leaders in sex education insisting that the facts of sex should be restored, as they would phrase it, "to the courses already in the curriculum where these facts normally belong." Furthermore, the leaders of the movement may claim that they should not be held responsible for the mistakes made by some sex fanatics in the field. However, it is doubtful whether the authors of even the most conservative program could ever control the situation. We hope to show in the next chapter the unsoundness of the whole idea of sex instruction to be given to groups of children. For the present we are concerned about stating the facts as far as they are available.

During the period of 1919-1930, two kinds of sex instruction have been given in the public high schools. One is called emergency instruction and is given through lectures, occasional talks on sex hygiene, as well as through pamphlets, exhibits, and the like. The second kind, i.e., integrated sex instruction, treats the matter in connection with such subjects as biology, zoölogy, botany, general science, physiology, hygiene, physical education, social studies, psychology, and home economics.

The Situation in 1920

In January, 1920, the United States Bureau of Education and the United States Public Health Service sent out a questionnaire to obtain information regarding the status of sex instruction in the high schools. The questionnaire was sent to over 12,000 high schools and brought 6,488 replies. The schools from which replies were received naturally fell into three groups. They are as follows:[11] No sex instruction, 3,850; those giving emergency instruction, 1,633; those giving regular, integrated sex education, either directly, or in connection with the regular curriculum,

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[11] Newell D. Edson, *The Status of Sex Education in High Schools*, Washington, D. C., 1922.

1,005. Thus 40 per cent of those replying were giving some sort of instruction. If we consider that those not answering were unfavorable to the teaching, it still means that one-fifth of the high schools of the country were giving some kind of sex instruction. There has been as yet no general attempt to introduce sex instruction into the public elementary schools.

The Government published, in 1922, a book by Benjamin J. Gruenberg, *High Schools and Sex Education*, instructing teachers how to deal with the subject. In March, 1927, a questionnaire was sent by the United States Public Health Service and the United States Bureau of Education to the 16,937 principals of senior high schools of the country for the purpose of ascertaining the status of sex education in their schools. The results were published in 1928 by the United States Public Health Service as Venereal Disease Bulletin No. 87 under the title, *Status of Sex Education in the Senior High Schools of the United States.*

The questionnaire form included four major sections: (1) the extent to which certain health and science courses were taught; (2) "the effort that was being made to interpret through such courses those phases of sex education intended to prepare the student more fully for the individual and social problems of life"; (3) the type of supplementary methods being used in and out of classroom "to help the student understand the control of, and give healthy expression to, emotions"; and (4) the opinion of the principal as to the need of sex education in the high school to-day.

We realize, of course, that statisticians do not recogize favorably the questionnaire method of gathering data, and that a 50 per cent response to any questionnaire is all that can be expected. Still, for want of any better source of information, we are compelled to use the latest available data gathered by the United States Public Health Service in collaboration with the United States Bureau of Education in order to ascertain what is being done in the public high schools with regard to sex instruction. Hence we shall quote from the questionnaire returns as published in the *Status of Sex Education in the Senior High Schools of the United States* whatever facts and figures would seem to be most significant. First of all, only 33.9 per cent, or 5,745 principals, answered the questionnaire. And of those who replied, 55.1 per cent reported no sex education at all. And of those who did report any sex education, 29 per cent reported integrated sex education, while 16 per cent reported emergency sex education. When we consider what meager amount of sex instruction—for instance, an occasional lecture—may be qualified as "emergency sex education," we realize that the subject is not taught as widely as some believe. The Legislature of Alabama was the first to present, in 1927, the so-called "sexology bill for the schools," requiring all public schools to have courses relating to sex, with male and female instructors to teach the subject "in a delicate manner." Yet even in that state the subject was not at all taught generally. In 1927 there were, in Alabama, 199 senior high schools. Sixty-seven of these replied to the questionnaire. Of these, 31 reported no sex education whatever, 12 reported integrated sex education, and 24 reported emergency sex education.

EVIDENCES OF WANING INTEREST

There was, on the whole, less interest in the subject in 1927 than in 1920. The country was beginning to recover from the psychosis produced by the World War. Here are the figures quoted on page 3 of the Bulletin *Status of Sex Education in the Senior High Schools of the United States* with regard to the extent to which sex education was reported in the years 1920 and 1927:

Total senior high schools in United States		Total replies		Percentage of replies to total schools	
1920	1927	1920	1927	1920	1927
12,025	16,937	6,488	5,745	54.0	33.9

Type of Sex Education

Integrated				Emergency				None			
Number		Per cent		Number		Per cent		Number		Per cent	
1920	1927	1920	1927	1920	1927	1920	1927	1920	1927	1920	1927
1,005	1,665	15.5	29.0	1,633	917	25.2	16.0	3,850	3,163	59.3	55.1

We discover that the percentage of replies to the questionnaire of 1927 was proportionately 20 per cent less than that of those received from the similar questionnaire of 1920, and, moreover, 55.1 per cent of those who replied in 1927 were not giving any kind of sex education.

Furthermore, the report would seem to offer evidence that educators are beginning to realize that direct sex education, described here as emergency sex education, given in the form of lectures, and so forth, was not desirable, for we find that the amount of emergency sex education decreased from 25 per cent in 1920 to 16 per cent in 1927.[12] There was, it is true, an increase in the form of integrated sex education from 15.5 per cent in 1920 to 29 per cent in 1927, but when we consider how loose is the terminology used, how little would be required to justify the use of this particular term (for instance, merely bringing out the social aspects of sex in connection with such subjects as general science, hygiene, home economics, or social studies), we recognize that this increase in so-called integrated sex education does not at all imply that educators have come to realize to this greater extent the advisability of classroom instruction in sex matters. We must bear this circumstance in mind also when we are told on page 5 of the Bulletin that those giving integrated sex education were 8 per cent in 1920 and 10 per cent in 1927. In fact, when we let the figures themselves speak, we realize that the subject of sex is taught in less schools now than ten years ago.

Here are the figures. In 1920, there were some 12,000 high schools in the country, and in 1927 there were 16,937. But sex education was given in 1920 in 2,638 high schools, while in 1927 the number had dropped to 2,582, despite the increase in the number of high schools. The figures demonstrate that there has been not only absolute decrease but also relatively an even greater decrease in the number of high schools teaching sex subjects.

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[12] *Status of Sex Education,* Washington, D. C., 1928, p. 4.

The evidence is even more encouraging when we come to consider the facts presented by Table IX on page 10, from which we learn that of the 2,582 high schools that reported sex education of some kind or other, only 1,154 dealt with the subject of reproduction. The Bulletin itself admits on page 10: "It is evident that high schools are availing themselves of opportunities presented only to a limited extent."

Significant evidence is presented by the following Table,[13] from which we see the large percentage of schools in which physical examination is given to all students and followed in many instances by personal conferences. It is in these personal conferences that individual help may be given.

Total Schools Reporting—5,745

For all students		Physical examination for athletes only (schools)		Personal conference following examination (schools)	
Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
1,993	34.7	604	10.5	1,249	21.7

A wholesome reaction from some of the methods adopted immediately after the War is exhibited in the following Table (No. XI) showing how small is the number[14] of schools that use card exhibits (*Keeping Fit* for boys, and *Youth and Life* for girls) to further sex education. The low percentage of schools using books and pamphlets is likewise surprising:

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[13] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Supplemental devices	Number of schools reporting their use	Per cent of total schools replying
Exhibits	507	8.8
Books and pamphlets	772	13.4
Personal conference as a result of physical examination	1,249	21.7

When we find that two-thirds of the principals replying express themselves as believing in the need of sex education, we may well ask what kind of sex education are they approving. Specifically the question reads: *What is your opinion of the need for, and the importance of, including in courses now in the curriculum of the high school, the topics mentioned under question 111?* The following topics were mentioned under question 111: Human reproduction; the physiological and psychological significance of internal secretions of glands; the physiology of seminal emissions; physiology and hygiene of menstruation; the personal and community aspects of venereal diseases; heredity and eugenics; value of monogamy; self-control; guidance of emotions and impulses; sex attraction; boy-girl relationships; the rôle of love in life.

Here is the Table expressing the opinions of the need for sex education, classified according to type of sex education:

Type of sex education	Total schools reporting	Schools expressing opinion of need									
		Yes		Yes (qualified)		Neutral		No (qualified)		No	
		Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Total	5,745	3,019	52.6	764	13.3	302	5.3	141	2.5	1,519	26.4
Integrated	1,665	1,114	66.9	249	15.0	83	5.0	23	1.4	196	11.8
Emergency	917	513	55.9	145	15.8	57	6.2	30	3.3	172	18.8
None	3,163	1,392	44.0	370	11.7	162	5.1	88	2.8	1,151	36.4

We may rightly assume that many expressed themselves in favor of sex education without committing themselves to the need of instruction on every topic mentioned. For instance, no one would oppose class instruction on such subjects as self-control or the value of monogamy, while many would object to class instruction on such subjects as human reproduction, or the personal and community aspects of venereal diseases.

Table XIV presented on page 13 of the Bulletin would likewise seem to offer scant encouragement to those who have been pleading for class instruction in sex matters. While 65.9 per cent of the principals confess that sex education is needed, only 17.6 per cent admit that the kind that is being given in their high schools is appreciated by "students, school officials, parents, and the general public." We need not be surprised at this judgment, for only 7.7 per cent of the principals report satisfactory results from the sex education given in their high schools.

Similar results were obtained in 1925 in answer to a questionnaire sent to public high schools. One of the questions read: *Do you believe, as has sometimes been* *urged, that sex education tends to arouse undesirable curiosity regarding sex matters?* In response to this question, 18 high schools replied "No" without qualification; 11 gave such answers as "No, unless improperly given." Three declare that sex education always arouses undesirable curiosity, and 12 others think that it may under unfavorable conditions. In 3 schools there was a division of opinion.[15] Hence we have only 18 high schools admitting that sex instruction will not arouse undesirable curiosity, while 26 high schools see danger in the offing.

We believe that all these findings justify the following judgment expressed by a priest who studied both the publications of the United States Public Health Service on the subject as well as the field itself:

> The United States may be standing to the fore in this matter, but even here sex instruction in the schools has never gotten beyond the experimental stage. Older methods are continually being discarded for the new. One thing is certain, unless morality and religion are given a prominent place in sex education, it is doomed to miserable failure and, we hope, a speedy death.

The Status of Sex Education in the Senior High Schools amply confirms this judgment. And just as the United States Public Health Service has greatly reduced its work in the field of sex education, and as even many non-Catholics now condemn much that was done under the influence of the hysteria of the World War, so we look forward to the day when the famous second sober thought of the American people will let them condemn unanimously much of what was done in the name of sex education in the public schools.

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[15] *Educational Review*, Sept., 1925. p. 91.

CHAPTER IV

CRITICISM OF SEX INSTRUCTION IN THE SCHOOLS

We have in the preceding chapter stressed the fact that Catholics were suspicious of the movement for sex instruction in the schools.* However, they were not alone in their opposition to the movement. G. Stanley Hall designated the reckless type of sex enlightenment a "psychic rape" of the young. Dean Shailer Matthews, of the University of Chicago, also expressed himself strongly against sex instruction in the schools: "It is a mistake to teach boys and girls to substitute physiology for the Decalogue. Lives grounded on moral idealism withstand temptations better than lives which have been taught only a prudential chastity."

Public school teachers as a class felt themselves ill prepared for teaching the subject. Dr. Peabody relates that in a large public school none of the women teachers felt herself adequately prepared for the public talk to girls, and consequently outsiders had to be called in.[1] In general the opposition to classroom instruction in sex matters was based on the facts that the indiscriminate teaching of an evil can hardly be expected to cure that evil; that the average teacher is not qualified to impart such knowledge in the proper manner; that in every schoolroom are to be found children who have managed to escape contamination, and that it is by far preferable to keep them in happy ignorance as long as possible; and that a teacher, finally, may become an object of suspicion.

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* We shall later deal with the problem as to what can and should be done in this regard in our Catholic schools: Cf. *infra*, pp. 172 ff.

[1] *Some Experiences in Sex Education in the Home and High School*. New York, 1921, p. 12.

The critics were right in contending that any kind of sex instruction that would be merely informational and that would reject moral education as a useless appendage would eventually become immoral, though in the beginning it was naturally non-moral. Introducing the young to the mysteries of sex with its alluring pleasures, and without providing any safeguard other than a warning about the dangers of "uncontrolled indulgence," would prove immoral because it offered no foundation of strong will. Mature physicians might advocate scientific initiation; they may be personally immune; but the same cannot be said of young children.

Well-informed critics called attention to the fact that it was highly improbable that age-old evils had never been treated properly before, and that it would be incumbent upon the twentieth century to devise a panacea for all sex evils in the form of universal sex instruction. Students of the history of education pointed out that whatever was good in the movement for sex instruction was not new; and whatever was new was very suspicious. One author recalled the testimony of an eighteenth century writer who reported that the schools which had introduced courses in sex instruction as advocated by the Philanthropinists had become "veritable" pest houses of immorality."[2]

Mere instruction, as Cardinal Newman says of faith, while illuminative is not operative. Socrates, indeed, maintained like the modern intellectualist that the practice of good is connected with our knowledge as effect to cause. But any doctrine about the all-sufficiency of knowledge is a perpetuation of the heresy first propounded by Satan in Paradise concerning the tree of knowledge:[3] "In what day soever you shall eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Sad experience belies the truth of this teaching. "The better" does not determine us, and virtue should not be confounded with the determination of our will by the realizing of "the better" as understood by the intellectualist. Let us be forewarned by the experience of the Encyclopedists of the eighteenth century, who restated the brilliant doctrinal paradox. Being ideologists, they denied that customs react upon laws, and maintained that it was within the power of laws to reform morals; that if you would change at one stroke the morals of a people, you need merely to cut off, or add a few statutes to, the law-books of that nation.

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[2] Joseph Ries, *Kirche und Keuschheit*, Paderborn, 1922, p. 49.

Another objection offered to class instruction in sex hygiene was that, while the teaching might do away with sex ignorance, it would at the same time break down the safeguard of modesty, offer material for sex discussion among the pupils, and of itself be no protection at all against the allurements of the flesh. It was said that knowledge of the danger of venereal diseases is no adequate protection to adults, and hence mere information would be no sufficient safeguard for the young.

Doctors in general have not much faith in the knowledge of physical dangers proving a deterrent from sexual sin, particularly in the case of young people. They admit quite frankly that young medical students are prone in the beginning of their course to take chief interest in those sections of their textbooks that deal with the physiology and pathology of the sex organs, yet that this knowledge as well as their familiarity with the physical dangers of promiscuity is not known to deter these young men from sin. On the contrary, they admit that medical students on the whole are known to be more lax in this regard than the students of other university courses. Hence many doctors believe that detailed sex knowledge is an incitement to sexual offenses rather than a deterrent. Dr. Edward L. Keyes says bluntly enough:[4] "Until the freedom of medical students from infection bears witness to the contrary, we must grant to moral education the first place in the campaign against venereal disease."

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[3] Gen. III, 5.

All sex instruction that stresses the biological and the material factors merely serves as an excitant for the imagination. It proves a temptation instead of a liberating factor. While the sex information is being imparted, not only the intellect is on the alert but also the curious sensuality of the young child, and the latter is inflamed with the new knowledge. What Professor Münsterberg, the famous psychologist of Harvard University, said some years ago is still worth quoting in this connection:

> We may instruct with the best intention to suppress, and yet our instruction itself must become a source of stimulation, which unnecessarily creates the desire for improper conduct. . . . The cleanest boy and girl can not

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[4] "Morals and Venereal Disease," in: *Social Hygiene*, Jan., 1916, p. 55.

> give theoretical attention to the thoughts concerning sexuality without the whole mechanism for reproduction entering automatically into action. . . . A nation which tries to lift its sexual morality by dragging the sexual problems to the street for the inspection of the crowd without shyness and without shame, and which willfully makes them objects of gossip and stage entertainment, is doing worse than Münchhausen when he tried to raise himself by his scalp.[5]

It has also been said that the sex instruction was liable to put forward by some years the time of suggestion and temptation. Temptations which normally belong to the age of eighteen would be experienced at the age of twelve or fourteen, or even earlier in those cases where the sex instruction is part of the elementary school curriculum. Statistics and facts have been adduced as showing that the teaching of sex hygiene to immature minds has been responsible for the downfall of the young. Lieutenant Colonel Annie J. Cowden, executive officer in charge of the Salvation Army's women's social work, conducted a survey in the Middle West in the summer of 1928 and reported that "the teaching of sex hygiene to immature minds, idleness, and loneliness are responsible for the downfall of most girls."[6]

Scores of other non-Catholic authorities could be quoted in condemnation of class instruction in sex hygiene. Dr. Howard B. Woolston declares:[7] "The matter of sex education in this country has not been thoroughly threshed out by the experts. The general impression appears to be that direct teaching upon such matters by inexperienced instructors is unwise.'' Hence he should not have been surprised at what he found in 34 American cities he visited: in 12, no regular sex education was given; in 10 others, a little was given sporadically by lecturers; in 7, instruction was given in the upper classes, principally to girls; in 3 other places, the teaching of such matters had been discontinued in the schools, or was forbidden, because of the objection of parents, while in the 2 remaining cities, the talks were for parents only.

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[5] Francis Heiermann, S.J., *The Teaching of Sex Hygiene in Our Schools*, St. Louis, 1914, pp. 16-17.

[6] *Washington Star*, Aug. 29, 1928.

[7] *Prostitution in the United States*, New York, 1921, p. 296.

Dr. Thomas W. Galloway, described after his death in 1929 as the ''spiritual leader'' of the movement for social-hygiene education in the District of Columbia,[8] wrote in 1921: ''Various half-considered efforts have been made to introduce sex education wholesale into the schools, mostly with harmful results.''[9] Elsewhere the same writer confesses with regard to sex instruction in the schools:[10] ''In very large degree this work has been temporary, exotic, and superficial; and has been so recognized by those engaged in it.'' Dr. Stelzel, a Viennese specialist in psychotherapy, says: ''The idea of explaining sex matters to school-classes is simply monstrous; it would inevitably induce countless children to fill their minds with such things. The classroom method is not, I believe, practicable. The problem is one for individual treatment.''[11]

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[8] *Bulletin of the Social Hygiene Society of the District of Columbia*, 1930, No. 1, p. 1.

[9] *Biology of Sex*, revised edition, New York, 1922, p. vii,

[10] *The Responsibilities of Religious Leaders in Sex Education*, New York, 1921, p. 13.

[11] *Nervöse Angstzustände und ihre Behandlung*, Berlin, 1906

WHY THE STRONG OPPOSITION?

When we consider what has been done in some schools under the name of sex instruction, we readily understand this opposition. But we need not at all refer to what might be described as mistakes of individual teachers. Instead, we need refer the reader only to what is the authoritative textbook in the matter: Dr. Gruenberg's *High Schools and Sex Education, a Manual of Suggestions on Education Related to Sex*;[12] it suggests, on page 61, that the girls of the fourth-year course in high school should study not only the changes, both physical and mental, in the adolescent girl and boy, but also "the reproductive organs of the woman with demonstration of a life-size model." A European writer suggested that the best remedy for the morbid curiosity of the young would be to let them study human anatomy by examining corpses.[13]

The earliest experiments with sex instruction were made in the German schools, and hence we should not fail to heed what German writers report about the results. We must admit, it is true, that the Germans went to extremes in the matter. For instance, Marie Lischnewska in her book, *Die geschlechtliche Belehrung der Kinder*,[14] accuses the Catholic Church of being an enemy of the human body, and considers sexual instruction the most important factor in education. She contends that the school and not the home has the first rights in the matter. She insists on class instruction in sex matters and presents a systematic course in sex hygiene. But this extreme position, as well as less extreme views, has long since been abandoned in Germany. For a time, however, the reformers had so large a following that the German Bishops found it necessary repeatedly to issue joint Pastorals against the practice. Dr. Jacob Hoffmann presents a formidable array of German authorities, Catholic and non-Catholic, against class instruction in sex hygiene.[15] Father Joseph Schröteler, S.J., one of the outstanding German writers on the subject, admits that no one in Germany would any longer regard sexual instruction as a panacea for sexual ills.[16]

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[12] Washington, D. C., 1922.

[13] Seved Ribbing, *Gesundes Geschlechtsleben*, Donauwoerth, 1907, p. 159.

[14] Berlin, 1906.

Professor F. M. Foerster deserves much credit for having opposed from the beginning the efforts made in behalf of sex instruction in the schools of Germany. He exposed relentlessly the fallacies in the arguments advanced in behalf of the movement. He took issue, for instance, with the physicians who welcomed the new frankness with which sex matters were being discussed. These men confessed that they had never been able to understand why people do not talk as freely about the sexual functions as about other physical processes. The atmosphere of mystery which surrounds the sphere of sex seemed to these men but a product of what some of them erroneously call "the Christian doctrine of the sinfulness of the sex instinct," and without further consideration they had dismissed the instinct of shame as a mere relic of an obsolete philosophy.* Foerster[17] finds it strange that physicians, of all people, should fail to see the reason for the reticence in matters of sex. The only explanation may be their own preoccupation and their ignorance of the deeper problems of the psychology of the sex life. Else they would have realized that this reticence is essential to a wholesome sex life. Foerster rightly insists that if the sex factors with their strong physical urge be allowed to occupy much of the conscious life, they will occupy too large a place in the interests of the individual. To prevent sex from domineering the mental life of the young must be one of the chief objectives of all training in chastity. For if sex be allowed so important a place in the mind, it will gain so strong a power over the will as to deprive the individual of the control of his actions.

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[15] *Handbuch der Jugendkunde und Jugenderziehung*, Freiburg, 1922, pp. 192-193, 203.

[16] *Die geschlechtliche Erziehung*, Düsseldorf, 1929, p. 105.

* Cf. *supra*, pp. xxvi ff.

[17] *Marriage and the Sex Problem*, New York, 1913, pp. 186-187.

We realize that American Catholics had ample reason to be suspicious of the movement to introduce sex instruction into the schools. The results of the dangerous experiment have justified their worst fears. We consulted fifty priests who either in colleges or in city parishes have had extensive experience with such graduates of public high schools as had received sex instruction in the classroom. They report that the Catholic graduates were almost unanimous in condemning such instruction as doing more harm than good. Several of the graduates stated that the segregation of the sexes for the purpose of the instruction did not prove successful, as the boys and girls were in the habit of exchanging the information given to the two groups. They also reported that the sex instruction was frequently an indirect cause of one sinful practice or another—and of ‘‘petting’’ and homosexual practices with girls—in that it directed the conversation of high school students into the wrong channels, and the awakened curiosity sought satisfaction from the "wise ones" and from further reading matter.

A man who had himself given a course in sex hygiene admitted that proper segregation was practically impossible. He found that boys would resort to all sorts of devices in order to be in the room when lectures not intended for them were to be given. A pastor reported that in his city the superintendent of the public schools had sent a questionnaire to a club of Catholic women in order to get their judgment on the advisability of introducing sex instruction into the local high schools. One hundred ninety women replied, and only 10 expressed themselves in favor of class instruction in sex hygiene. A priest who has had many years' experience in Catholic college work reports with regard to bringing up the subject in college classes: "Where such matters are discussed in class there is almost always a protest on the part of some of the students, who object to having their time taken up and sensibilities hurt by matter that 'can't concern more than a minority, who should take their problems to a priest privately.' Some students clamor for too frank a class discussion; most of them, I believe, object to it."

The Arguments for Class Instruction

Yet we must admit that there have been Catholic students of the subject who arrived at the conclusion that *exceptional* situations may call for class instruction in sex matters. They present arguments that sex matters might be treated to some extent in the biology class, and that men teachers might take up the subject with boys while women teachers take it up with girls.

The recommendation has also been made that a conscientious physician should address the boys and the girls separately once a year, under the supervision of the pastor. Class instruction in sex matters was advocated some years ago by the Catholic Professor Goettler, who contended that it was much easier to give the instruction to groups than to an individual, because the group did away with the feeling of embarrassment.[18]

Needless to say, it is the very circumstance of the group's presence that would increase the embarrassment of the average teacher. Also, we do not believe that Professor Goettler can answer the objection that group instruction would tempt the pupils to discuss the subject of sex among themselves. It has been said, it is true, that such discussions can be prevented by bringing out the reason for giving the instruction, and by insisting that the subject is one that is not matter for common talk. The defenders of class instruction have also recommended the device of presenting the matter in such a way, or at least to conclude the instruction in such a way, that pupils when leaving the classroom will be talking about something else. They likewise believe that the necessary information may sometimes be given to the pupils in such a way that they have not the slightest notion that what they are receiving is sex information.

All these arguments presuppose such extraordinary teachers and pupils that they cannot allow us to change our position: class instruction in sex matters is not advisable. All recent writers on the subject seem to be agreed that there should be no subject in the curriculum to be known as sex hygiene. All believe that whatever information may be found necessary should be given incidentally, without undue stress. Here if anywhere is it true that the best is learned incidentally.

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[18] *Katechetische Blätter*, 1916, pp. 225ff.

Those who favor sex instruction in the classroom to meet exceptional needs also attempt to answer the objection that one spoiled pupil would offset by his remarks the instruction given by the teacher. They contend that it is matter of common experience that such corrupting influences will be at work even though there is no sex instruction, and that those who are forfended by timely instruction will turn with disgust from such agents of corruption. In this way, they hold that proper sex instruction would take the wind out of the sails of the corrupting influences that may be at work in the school.[19]

Another argument offered is that the school must deal with the average pupil. The contention is that the majority of pupils have suffered some harm either by indulging their curiosity, or through information supplied by evil companions or others, and the teacher must bear in mind this situation when trying to adapt his instruction to the situation in hand.[20]

However, none of these arguments would justify the policy of universal sex instruction in the schools. We believe that discussion of the subject before the class may be permissible in case it is notorious that corrupting influences have been at work among the pupils generally. In such a case the public crime must be fought by public measures. The teacher may be justified in speaking plainly in order to give the young people the proper attitude towards chastity. It is questionable whether it is always advisable to dismiss the pupil who may have been the worst offender. Educators report that such pupils have been known, when given an opportunity to reform, to prove a help rather than a hindrance in raising the tone of the class.[21]

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[19] A. Weil, *Sexual Reform und Sexual Wissenschaft*, Stuttgart, 1922.

[20] Franz Walter, *Die sexuelle Aufklärung der Jugend*, Donauwoerth, 1907, p. 144.

Still, it may be necessary at times for the sake of the rest of the class to get rid of undesirable pupils. This problem may grow more serious with the years because of the universality of secondary education. It does not require long experience with adolescents to discover that not all are fit subjects for secondary education. The law may compel them to remain in school till they are eighteen, but they are there against their will, and, lacking interest or ability for books, they may prove serious problems of discipline and morality. The teacher should not hesitate to employ strong measures in order to safeguard the moral health of the rest. Dr. Rhaban Liertz reports the case where the teacher of the highest grade in the elementary school gave a public address to her girls after a scandal had occurred. The results were good: the girls were properly informed, and ever after showed a deep trust in the teacher, and the mothers of the girls were likewise grateful for the instruction given.[22]

In pleading for group instruction, the argument has been advanced that there "is almost as much danger in individual instruction as there is in teaching a class."

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[21] Oskar Pfister, *Die Liebe des Kindes und ihre Fehlentwicklungen*, Leipzig, 1922, p. 323.

[22] *Wanderungen durch das gesunde und kranke Seelenleben bei Kindern und Erwachsenen*, Munich, 1924, pp. 54 ff.

In numbers, so they say, there is some safety, if safety should be found anywhere in dealing with so delicate a subject. In arguing the point, reference is made to the danger lurking in the intimate, personal and individual work that may be undertaken even under the false plea of safeguarding the virtue of the pupil. Reference is also made to the danger of moral contagion: "If not all parents are morally in a position to attempt the task of sex instruction; so much less are all teachers."

We are quite willing to grant that there is danger in private instruction, and also that not all teachers should venture to undertake it. But any teacher who is morally too weak to undertake the private instruction is certainly unfit to give public instruction. And we must insist that there is certainly much less danger in private instruction than in public instruction: the private instruction should be given only when needed individually, and only as much should be given as is needed individually, whereas in the public instruction there can be no possibility of meeting the needs of every individual pupil.

Others have recommended the writing of a manual of sex instruction for girls in the fourth year of the Catholic high school. The matter was suggested in connection with this problem: How, when, and by whom in the secondary school should the Catholic girl be instructed in matters pertaining to sex and marriage? [23] If the manual were to be written after the manner of Father Fulgence Meyer's *Helps to Purity*,[24] and to be used in the same way as the author of that book advises, it would not call for public sex instruction. The manual would not be a textbook for the girls, but would serve as an aid for the teacher in meeting the individual problems of her pupils.

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[23] Ellamay Horan, "Religious Needs of the High-School Girl," in: *Thought*, Dec., 1928, p. 394.

[24] Cincinnati, 1929.

Invariably we find that when priests advise sex instruction to separate groups of boys and girls they suggest limitations or speak of exceptional situations. For instance, a priest is quoted by Father Matthew A. Michel, O.S.B., in his *Sex Education in the Catholic High School:*[25] "I believe it is quite advisable to a certain degree to instruct boys and girls who have reached the age of puberty in the mysteries of sex life and sex conduct befitting their age, the instruction to be given to the boys and to the girls separately." This priest, however, did not have in mind the mysteries of reproduction, but only those matters that pertain to the personal life of the adolescent. His mind is brought out well by the instruction given by Hirscher in his *Katechetik:* "Let catechists never teach the material side of sex. . . . The catechist shall deal only with the moral and religious aspects. Let him bear in mind, however, that most of these fourteen-year-old children are acquainted with the physical aspect as well. This supposition will allow him to speak more freely; he will have less trouble in selecting his words than if he were speaking before younger pupils."

Another priest—while maintaining that a lecture comprising all the necessary knowledge of sex life can never be given to a group of girls without evil results, as it would be an invasion of the essential privacy of such matters—concedes that private instruction may be supplemented by very carefully selected literature on the subject. He advises, however, that those books be read in the teacher's presence, and questions thence arising be answered by her.[26]

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[25] Washington, D. C., 1929, p. 47.

Catholic writers, priests, parents, and teachers would seem to be of one mind with Pope Pius XI when he condemns in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth* (p. 23) those extremists who falsely imagine "they can forearm youths against the dangers of sensuality by means purely natural, such as foolhardy initiation and precautionary instruction for all indiscriminately, even in public; and, worse still, by exposing them at an early age to the occasions, in order to accustom them, so it is argued, and as it were to harden them, against such dangers."

Our rule must be: no class instruction on the physical details of sex. While we should remove the cloak of false shame and prudery which has previously shrouded this subject in certain circles, we must take great care not to tear away as well the veil of modesty and delicacy which is necessary for its highest and finest interpretation. Proper instruction combined with a fine spiritual personality can accomplish much with the young. In one institution hundreds of boys were known to have preserved their baptismal purity, largely because their spiritual director, a real man of God, spoke to them in terms that were clear and unmistakable.[27]

No Experimentation Needed in Catholic Schools

Our Catholic educators need not make any dangerous experiments themselves. We may learn from the experiments made in other countries and in our public schools. Our educators should be satisfied to follow the rule laid down by one of their best-known representatives, Brother Eugene, O.S.F.:

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[26] Cf. Medicus, *Medical Essays*, Milwaukee, 1928, pp. 74-75.
[27] *Quid vobis videtur?*, Dublin, 1923, p. 3.

> Sex instruction, so indiscriminately advocated by irresponsible writers, should not, as a rule, be imparted in public to a class. Occasions may arise when it may be opportune to say a word in private. In general the matter of sex instruction should be left to the parents and the spiritual director. For boys who receive religious instruction and receive the Sacraments regularly, sex matters will generally regulate themselves. Sex instruction to a group or class in public would do no good to those who need it, and would do real harm to the innocent.[28]

Nietzsche once said: "Common life makes common characters." There is a germ of truth in the statement insofar as the suggestive influence of the crowd represents a serious danger to the individual whose life it dominates. The results obtained in some of the English public schools prove how much can be accomplished by creating a certain tone in a school.* Boys follow one another like sheep, for good or evil. Social suggestion is peculiarly disastrous in connection with sexual matters. Catholic character education should make the individual independent of the crowd by strengthening the personal conscience and by developing an earnest public opinion which ennobles the individual instead of degrading him. Hence, a few well-chosen words on the part of the teacher may prove fruitful in bringing about a state of public opinion in the class in favor of chastity. The offensive is the best defensive. Mere passive innocence is of no value; everything depends upon the aggressive power of conviction. An excellent field for the practice of determined will is the social life of a school.

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[28] *Boy Guidance*, edited by Kilian J. Hennrich, O.M.Cap., New York, 1925, pp. 5-6.

* Cf. *infra*, pp. 422 ff.; see also pp. 240 ff.

Our teachers will feel encouraged in their efforts if they compare their opportunities in the matter of training in chastity with what other educators have to rely upon. Our teachers should never be disturbed in their own work because of the efforts made by teachers in the public schools over the subject of sex instruction. Our teachers have priceless assets to assist them in their work. A teaching Brother reports in a letter how this lesson of the priceless riches of the Catholic teacher was brought home to him in a striking way:

> Two years ago the School Masters' Club of a town in the Middle West held one of its regular meetings. Among the members was a Brother of one of our teaching communities, the only Catholic at the meeting. The matter of sex instruction was introduced and the Club agreed they were facing a serious problem. Sex instruction had been tried in their high school with the alleged result that several high school girls became patients in the maternity hospital, and yet the teachers felt there was need for sex instruction. The discussion brought them nowhere, and finally they called upon Brother —— to say whether and how this matter of sex was treated in the Catholic schools. The Brother explained that this subject was treated quite effectively in a distinctly Catholic manner. He told them of the Commandments, mainly the Sixth and the Ninth, which bind under pain of mortal sin. He told them of the sacredness of marriage in the Catholic mind; and explained to them what the Sacrament of Penance is, as a refuge of sinners, as a source of individual spiritual direction, and how effective a means against relapse. The group of teachers was told that each

Catholic is thoroughly instructed in the teaching of the Church on the Commandments and the Sacraments, and that thus any amount of sex knowledge is acquired, much of it almost unconsciously, but all of it surrounded by an air of the sublime, as becomes the sacredness of the Sacraments and the Commandments of God.

An earnest member of the Club finally jumped to his feet and enthusiastically exclaimed: "You [Catholics] have got it all over us!" and added that as far as means and motivation and even manner of instruction are concerned, our problems are pretty well solved.[29]

[29] Matthew A. Michel, O.S.B., *Sex Education in the Catholic High School,* Washington, D. C., 1929, pp. 70-71.

CHAPTER V

THE NEED OF SEX INSTRUCTION

We wish to state emphatically that in this chapter we are dealing with sex instruction as representing only one phase of the large subject of training in chastity. We do not share the view of those who write on this subject ''with unbounded confidence in the all-sufficiency of education.''* But at the same time we wish to deny that ignorance is innocence, or that ignorance is a sufficient protection against the temptations of the flesh. We do not believe that the darkness of ignorance could protect the young from a sin that loves darkness especially and that thrives most when shielded by darkness. Yet we believe that *it is desirable that the young be kept in ignorance of sex matters as long as possible.* It is St. Augustine who has coined the phrase ''divine ignorance.'' In the case of the child the ignorance of sex matters may be truly divine insofar as it keeps him ingenuous and free from any disturbing thought about the lower nature. Hence it would be criminal to introduce sex knowledge prematurely into the life of the child. Consequently, even though we do not believe that ignorance of sex matters is the essence of innocence, still we maintain that the child should be kept in ignorance of sex matters as long as possible.

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* Cf. *supra,* p. 40.

CAN SEX KNOWLEDGE BE KEPT FROM OUR YOUNG PEOPLE TO-DAY?

But we must ask: How long can sex knowledge be kept from the young in these latter days when suggestive billboards, salacious movies and talkies, magazines with impassioned stories of love and infidelity, vulgar playmates, immoral fashions, and dozens of other factors arouse and satisfy their curiosity? A mother may well say: "I don't believe in teaching my boys and girls any facts concerning sex. I prefer to keep them innocent until they have grown up." How can they remain innocent when they, no matter which way they turn, are confronted with things like those we have just enumerated? Their mind and memory are bound to become a storehouse of all kinds of immoral thoughts. And unless they are exceptionally strong-willed boys and girls—which the average child is not—they will sooner or later practice the things they have seen or heard, and then their misfortune begins.

We shall in a later chapter take up the question as to when the average boy and girl should learn the essential facts.* All that we wish to maintain for the present is that there is no question at all in our day of keeping the sex knowledge from the young. Rather it is a question of who shall tell them—vulgar companions or pure, truth-loving lips of parents, priests, or teachers. We know what has largely been the policy in the past. Our own investigation shows results similar to those obtained by Dr. Max Joseph Exner and Mr. Walter L. Hughes.

The Exner study is based on a total of 948 questionnaires received from college men. Five hundred sixty-two of these came from colleges of the Middle West and the Pacific Coast, and 386 from institutions in New York City. The study was published by the Association Press, in 1915, under the title, *Problems and Principles of Sex Education.* Mr. Walter L. Hughes conducted his study during 1920-21 in the State of North Carolina, under the supervision of the Bureau of Venereal Diseases of the State Board of Health, co-operating with the United States Public Health Service. The questionnaire was placed before a group of boys which, as a whole, represented a cross section of the state's boyhood—high school boys, mill boys, and preparatory school boys. Boys from farm homes were well represented in the first group, since this included many students in the smaller rural high schools. The majority of the boys selected for the study were of the ages fifteen to twenty. This age of older boyhood represents the period when boyhood has just emerged from its introduction to sex consciousness, and is living through a period of sex urge and moral strain. Questionnaires were returned by 1,029 boys. An abstract of Mr. Hughes' detailed report was published in the May, 1926, issue of the *Journal of Social Hygiene* under the title "Sex Experiences of Boyhood."

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* Cf. *infra*, pp. 123 ff.

Both the Exner and the Hughes studies show that the sex instruction in the early years is mainly left to the street. The Hughes study shows that 78 per cent of the boys received their first knowledge of sex from other boys, and Dr. Exner found that 85 per cent of the college men he questioned had gotten their first sex information from the same source.

No one will be surprised that all studies made show the effect of early haphazard instruction from the environment is distinctly bad. In the Hughes study, 74 per cent of the boys stated that the influence of this early information had been bad, as compared with 79 per cent in the Exner study. Obviously, we do not have the choice as to whether or not the young shall receive sex instruction. That they do receive it is inevitable.

The Irish priest-author of *Quid vobis videtur?* grows eloquent in denouncing the *laissez faire* policy that has to a very great extent prevailed in the past:

> Is it not a fact that, as a rule, the first, and oftentimes the sole, information—for the vague platitudinous references in the catechism class amount to nothing (in my opinion vague references are worse than silence, because they arouse curiosity and give an air of mystery, without giving information)—which a pure-minded boy gets of the mystery of human generation is from the polluted lips of some corrupt boy, or from a vulgar expression heard in the street, or from such other source of contagion? And if the age of puberty has been reached, with the sex instinct already making itself felt, the impure expression is usually what a spark is to powder. Nay more, one corrupt boy can, in this matter, contaminate a whole school. And even if the age of puberty has not been reached, the youth is probably old enough to understand the reference, often alas! a vulgar gibe or coarse jest regarding his very parents. What a shock to his innocent mind! How it cuts like a razor! How cruel it is! And the cruelty is intensified by the fact that something tells him it is a matter about which he cannot speak to his parents! No doubt, vague references may have already been made by unskilled teachers in a timid way; but these references have, for the most part, only the effect of arousing curiosity, and of aggravating the danger by surrounding it with mystery. At a certain age,

> curiosity regarding this subject is natural, and it is open-mouthed in its voracity for information. Must that natural curiosity be fed only by offal from the gutter, or with the honeyed poison from that latest curse to youth's innocence, the cinema, almost every scene of which is founded on a degraded presentation, in one form or another, of the sex problem? And whilst the demon of impurity is acting through its many agencies, and calling with its many siren voices, must the lips of the pure alone be mute? Why all this silence and mystery about a vice which of all others loves darkness, which could flourish only in darkness, a vice to which clear instruction properly imparted is as destructive as the sun's rays are to the germs of disease? Ignorance is not the same as innocence, and a time may, and often does, come, when ignorance can be maintained only at the cost of innocence; and when seeming innocence may take the form of whitewash on a tomb.[1]

Many of our Catholic people seem to have acted in the past upon the naïve view championed by a writer in a Catholic newspaper when he maintained that God Himself would furnish to the individual all the sex knowledge that would ever be necessary: "We believe that God Himself sees to it that we learn from Himself the facts we need to know on this most sacred and important subject." In support of his view the writer refers to the Blessed Virgin as having known, though scarcely more than a child, all that was needful when the Angel appeared to her announcing the birth of Christ. The writer concludes: "Not only unnecessary but hurtful is an initiation offered by anyone else." So shallow a view may be ignored.

However, we may not ignore Professor Foerster when he warns us that we should not attempt to offset the information gotten from the gutter by awakening through sex instruction that other gutter-snipe, the animal sex instinct, which will select even from the best information only what is vile. Foerster argued that sex instruction would merely serve to arouse this monster and would merely increase the sexual excitability unless there be present a force sufficiently strong to discipline the animal nature. We agree with Foerster that the best training in chastity is training in will power, but this does not at all dispense us from the duty of giving to the youth proper sex instruction before his mind is contaminated with the filth from the gutter. Sex instruction given at the proper time and in the proper way will not arouse the gutter-snipe of sensuality. It is precisely to forestall the onslaughts of sensuality that we must steal a march on the seducer before it is too late.

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[1] Dublin, 1923, pp. 10-12.

What is needed is complete education—one that will train the will without neglecting the rights of the intellect. If we neglect either of the two factors, we cannot obtain proper results. Instead of developing an integrated personality we shall have stunted growth.*

Professor Foerster himself realized later that with the universal corruption of the present day we can no longer choose between innocence and knowledge, but only between pure and impure knowledge—there is no other alternative.[2] He recognized the danger of letting the children get their first introduction to a realm in which man's happiness depends on the spiritualizing of the life of instinct, from foul sources, unseemly conversations, vile magazines and books, and lascivious curiosity. In consequence, their growing inclinations feed on the basest sentiments and the vilest pictures of the fancy; they brood over pleasures derived from what they learned in alleys and other dark corners. It is futile to expect that a lecture or a pious exhortation after the harm has been done, could atone for the gross neglect of years. How could the youth be expected to resist temptation through information gathered from dark corners while only an enlightened conscience would prove of real avail?

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* Cf. *infra*, pp. 496 ff.

[2] *Jugendlehre*, Berlin, 1919, p. 612.

One of the worst results of this purloined information is the fact that boys gradually settle down to the conviction that sexual life has only personal pleasure for its object. Hence we need not be surprised that their erroneous opinion is made to subserve passion. Later when higher aspects and responsibilities dawn upon them, they have lost the power of control: sensuality has gained the upper hand and successfully meets and dominates the spirit by its home-made philosophy. In the end we have mature men, who may be good-hearted and conscientious in ordinary life, yet who misunderstand the happiness and dignity of man with regard to sexual life, and look upon marriage as an institution intended for selfish gratification of lust without realizing its true obligations.[3]

Some people maintain that sex instruction is not necessary in case the child has been brought up in a good Christian atmosphere, and that sex matters will adjust themselves spontaneously under such circumstances. While it is true that the general education is of basic importance, it does not supersede the need for sexual instruction. If the knowledge is not furnished from pure sources, it will come to the youth in a vile way, and will certainly prove a problem to the strongest character. Of course, if the child has not been brought up properly, there is need first of all for strengthening the character, but also for proper information on this subject that is so important for human welfare.

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[3] *Ibid.*, p. 602.

In no case may we allow the youth "to stumble upon the significance of sex." It is largely due to the policy of leaving the young to themselves in this field that there have been so many wrong notions current among them, sometimes for several years of their life. Previous studies made on the subject offer abundant evidence that among the young there are generally current false notions about sex, for instance, that sex indulgence is necessary to physical health, or that one of the venereal diseases is no worse than a bad cold, or that nocturnal emissions which occur in young men are dangerous to health.

Needless to say, the catechism instruction as given to Catholic children will prevent or correct some of these notions. Still, we have found nevertheless that even among Catholic people—both young and old—there are many false notions concerning really important matters. A senior student in a preparatory seminary was on the verge of giving up his studies for the priesthood because he thought nocturnal emissions a disease resulting from sins of his early youth. He had been afraid to ask anyone about the situation. Another boy was staying away from Holy Communion fearing that nocturnal emissions were mortal sins, yet he lacked courage to ask for information.*

One should think that boys in a Catholic college would be most fortunately situated with regard to obtaining the necessary information from proper sources. It will therefore be illuminating to see the résumé of the answers received from twenty physicians with much experience among Catholic college boys, in reply to the question: *From what sources have your students received their principal information with regard to sex matters?*

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* Cf. *infra*, pp. 315 ff.

> Not so many of them bother to read any books on the subject; those who do are usually of the secretive type. The more boisterous ones will pick up any vulgar joke book they find and pass it around. Stories of the amorous type are read more by girls than boys. There is an increasing tendency for boys to get their information directly from girls, particularly during the high school period. The boys in college are usually quite anxious to get a good treatise on sex problems, to organize what information they have and round it out. Now and then, but seldom, a boy will get the little sex pamphlets brought out by irresponsible publishers; most of those who do are honest enough to bring them around for inspection after a few pages of reading make them suspicious; and they are quite willing to tear them up when they learn of their true character.

As to the eagerness of Catholic college boys to obtain reliable information, it may be of interest to quote the note submitted by a professor of sociology:

> You might be interested in the fact that I have assigned each year as collateral reading in Sociology the folder *Keeping Fit.*[4] Although I hesitated to make this assignment at first, feeling that the folder was written for high school boys, and hence much too elementary for the Sophomore and Junior in college—the boys have been almost unanimous in claiming that they got a great deal

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[4] Issued by the U. S. Public Health Service, Washington, D. C., 1918.

out of it, and that it was not too elementary for them by any means.

Another college professor reports that his students took a deep interest in Foerster's *Marriage and the Sex Problem* as offering them reliable information. That college students feel the need of information in this regard may be seen from the Religious Survey conducted at Notre Dame University during the year 1925-1926, when the young men mentioned Matrimony and the Sixth Commandment most frequently among the subjects on which they need instruction.[5]

IS THERE A LEGITIMATE CURIOSITY IN THESE MATTERS?

Under a section of the Davis questionnaire entitled "Sex Problems," one woman states[6] that the "outstanding problem of adolescence was the question of reproduction. I realized that children born out of wedlock were looked upon reproachfully. The Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary never was clearly understood, and it occurred to me that there might be a recurrence." What gross ignorance of the sublime doctrine of the Immaculate Conception! This woman wrote that in answer to the question where babies came from, she was told by her mother that "the doctor brought them in his grip and they were once stones in the brook," and finally she learned something of childbirth from medical publications furnished by a girl whose father was proofreader in a printing establishment.

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[5] *Official Bulletin of the University of Notre Dame*, Oct., 1926, p. 78.

[6] *Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-Two Hundred Women*, New York, 1929, p. 345.

It is certain that even among Catholics the young are introduced to the realm of sex largely by the avenue of passion and corruption. The minds of the young are filled with vile, sensual, and lascivious images, instead of obtaining for their whole life a sublime conception of the subject. Noble thoughts are essential to noble living. The immorality of the young, the abuse of marriage, the widespread practice of birth control, can be traced, to a large extent, to the lack of reverence for sexual life. It is the part of Catholic education to inculcate this reverence, and proper speech and not silence is the medium.[7]

In very rare cases the youth may himself object to sex instruction by protesting that he never does or thinks anything wrong. No positive conclusions can be drawn from such statements, and whatever instruction is necessary should be given nevertheless by a competent person. Such a case will be rare indeed, and the general experience is that the young people are grateful for having their curiosity satisfied in a proper way.

At all events there can be no doubt that we cannot keep sex knowledge away from the young, and we believe that we have no right to keep it from them, once they have attained the proper age. There is a legitimate curiosity in these matters that may and should be satisfied. It is a mistake to suppose that satisfying the curiosity properly will direct the attention of the young to sex matters. Just the opposite is the case. A youth assured me that after the teacher had instructed him in a proper way, he promptly forgot about the whole matter, and he believed that the same was true of his playmates. But, if we refuse to satisfy the curiosity in a proper way, the mind will continue to ruminate on the problem. Uncertainty on problems that are continually obtruding upon the mind will act as a stimulus prodding on continually to new thoughts and new searchings. The youngsters will investigate dictionaries, encyclopedias, health books, ask their playmates, and examine pictures, statues, and so forth. It is obvious how much moral harm may be wrought in the meantime, and it may well be that because of the first vile impressions of sex the subject will ever after be associated with the slime of the serpent. It is assuredly more wholesome to turn all the energy required for diverting the thoughts of sex into the channels that will make for the real objective—the preservation of chastity.

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[7] Cf. Hardy Schilgen, S.J., *Um die Reinheit der Jugend*, Düsseldorf, 1927, pp. 44-45.

It goes without saying that we must clearly distinguish between this legitimate curiosity and the sensual curiosity that is eager not only to know, but also to see and touch everything. However, the distinction is not always made. Proper information will satisfy all legitimate curiosity, but any kind of yielding or conceding will merely add fuel to sensual curiosity. Sensuality is the driving force of this kind of curiosity, and sensuality can never be satisfied. Knowledge is not its primary objective; its real objective is new objects for new thrills. But, to check this sensual curiosity requires that broad basis of character training that we have insisted upon all along.

The child who has been brought up properly will readily understand the need of this check. But what he cannot understand is why he does not receive an adequate answer when he asks for much-needed information. If we examine the catalogue of any public library, we shall find that the cards pertaining to sex books are black from constant usage. Much of the use of such books is doubtless the result of morbid curiosity or of a morbid state of mind.

One of the questions asked by Mr. Hughes in his inquiry among boys was, *Have you ever worried about the matters relating to sex functions?* Fifty per cent of the 658 boys answering the question admitted that sex, in one way or another, had become at some time a worry to them. These worries listed in order of their frequency were: masturbation, emissions, girls, venereal diseases, genitals, sex necessity, babies, pimples, and erections.[8]

In the Davis study a woman reports that when a cousin was born, a companion a year older than herself told her (she was then nine years old) something of the facts connected with birth. This prompted her to ask her mother for further particulars, but she met only with a rebuff. Her mother remarked that this girl must be "pretty old for her age." She then satisfied her curiosity by consulting older girls. "Curiosity about birth of babies dominated the interest of our group," she writes in answer to the question concerning the most vivid sex memories of childhood. She never received any instruction from her mother, not even having been instructed in regard to menstruation.

Physicians and psychologists contend that uncertainty and anxious notions concerning sex matters may be responsible for dementia praecox. Mrs. Hollingworth reports that an analysis of a hundred consecutive cases of dementia praecox as to their delusions and other symptoms showed sexual conflicts and trends in a majority of cases. Attitudes in regard to sex were distinctly unhealthy, and this was especially the case with the girls and the women included.[9]

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[8] *Journal of Social Hygiene*, May, 1926, p. 269.

We cannot do violence to nature and nature's laws. and legitimate curiosity is a legitimate urge of nature. If we suppress it violently and unnaturally, we shall pay the price. With a morbid trend to suppress all thoughts concerning sexual life—each thought being regarded as a mortal sin—we may interfere seriously with the normal development of the emotional life. The morbid condition of some anxious and scrupulous souls is merely suppressed sexuality.[10]

Psychiatrists believe that mental conflict and disorder arise more often from sex than from any other single cause in modern life. In fact, there are psychiatrists who believe that all mental maladies have their origin in the fears, cravings and inhibitions connected with sex. Though this extreme view of the origin of mental disorder is not generally held, it is true that a very large proportion of human ills do originate in the irrational and sinful mismanagement of this force in human life.

Dr. Davis reports that among girls the fear of pregnancy as a result of kissing, sitting beside a man in a car, eating certain foods, touching a boy's hand, is one of the most common phantasies and one causing great worry. Henry James has made the tragic results of such ignorance the theme of *Clara.* The girl who is both ignorant and innocent misunderstands bits of conversation and passages from letters and makes up her own theory of sex life. Infatuated with a friend, she forgets herself and kisses him. Believing herself to be pregnant in consequence, she broods over her condition and eventually commits suicide to preserve her family from disgrace.

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[9] *The Psychology of the Adolescent*, New York, 1928, p. 198.

[10] Cf. Hardy Schilgen, S.J., *Um die Reinheit der Jugend*, Düsseldorf, 1927, pp. 43-44; see also *infra*, pp. 235 ff.

There are frequent examples in the Davis study of how children constructed from partial information, given by their parents or others, their own theory about reproduction. Dr. Davis analyzes the case of a woman who, because of false training, had a complex on sex all her life.[11] First of all, we learn that she received "very little" information from her parents. Her mother answered her questions evasively and "not with all the truth." She was told not to ask questions. It left her curiosity unsatisfied and stimulated her to seek information elsewhere. Her nurse proved a more satisfactory informant. She told her "that people had babies just like cows, horses and pigs (I lived on a stock farm) had their little ones, but that it was all lovely, etc. I did not think so, and don't yet." The woman recalls that at ten this information shocked her. The origin of the feelings and attitudes remains obscure, but evidence of unpleasantness in connection with ordinary biological functions and relationships is clearly indicated throughout this woman's replies. Her mother keeps her in ignorance and makes her feel that questions on such matters are out of place. To her childish way of thinking, human birth is reduced to the level of the barnyard. Even menstruation is mentioned furtively. A subject that her mother can't discuss seems somewhat of a disgrace. Perversion, disease, licentiousness color the already distorted picture. To the home taboo is added what the woman misunderstands as the taboo of the Church.

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[11] *Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-Two Hundred Women*, New York, 1929, pp. 386-388.

The Rev. Dr. Thomas V. Moore, O.S.B., has shown in his *Dynamic Psychology*[12] how scrupulosity in many cases is a modification of the more or less crude impulse of exhibitionism. Often a simple explanation of the situation is sufficient to cure the patient. The Rev. Dr. Joseph J. Mullen has made similar findings in his *Psychological Factors in the Pastoral Treatment of Scruples.*[13]

Cardinal Newman has brought out in a famous passage how the curiosity of boys, if not properly directed and checked, will lead them first to evil thoughts, and then to evil conversations:

> One wrong speech provokes another; and thus there grows up among them from boyhood that miserable tone of conversation—hinting and suggesting evil, jesting, bantering on the subject of sin, supplying fuel for the inflammable imagination—which lasts through life, which is wherever the world is, which is the very breath of the world, which the world cannot do without, which the world "speaks out of the abundance of its heart," and which you may prophesy will prevail in every ordinary assemblage of men, as soon as they are at their ease and begin to talk freely—a sort of venal worship of the Evil One, to which the Evil One listens with special satisfaction, because he looks on it as the preparation for worse sins; for from bad thoughts and bad words proceed bad deeds.[14]

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[12] Philadelphia, 1924, pp. 202-203.

[13] *Studies in Psychology and Psychiatry*, Vol. I, No. 3, June, 1927.

[14] "The Intellect, the Instrument of Religious Training," in: *Sermons Preached on Various Occasions*, London, 1921, pp. 9-11.

The eminent Churchman brings out further how these evil associations first estrange the youth from home and then from religion: "And so he goes on, approximating more and more closely to skeptics and infidels, and feeling more and more congeniality with their modes of thinking, till one day suddenly, from some accident, the facts break upon him, and he sees clearly that he is an unbeliever himself."

We believe that Cardinal Newman has diagnosed correctly the process that has estranged thousands from the Church, and it all began with the ignoring of the legitimate urge of the young to satisfy their curiosity regarding the facts of sex. If the curiosity had been satisfied in a proper way, how different might the ending have been!

When psychiatrists like Dr. V. H. Podstata, of the University of California, say that "religion in its application to sex instincts creates mental depression, complexes and repressions that cause serious disturbances in the life of the individual,"[15] they may be accusing justly some of the representatives of religion, but they cannot justly charge the Church with prudery, for there is nothing in her doctrine or in her official practices that would not encourage her representatives to give to the youth correct information so as to prevent his receiving distorted and vicious impressions. The Church has never countenanced prudery. St. Jerome well interprets her mind when, in a letter to Eustochium, he describes the prudish woman as one "who regards as gross whatever is natural." The association of the gross or the sinful with sex must necessarily destroy the attitude of reverence in the minds of the young. We must teach them to think purely of what is intrinsically pure.*

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[15] *Washington Star*, March 21, 1928.

We grant that it is not an easy matter to teach the young plainly what is a sin and what is innocent and harmless. Our teachers of religion do not always draw a clear distinction, and young people may continue for years to believe something to be sinful which is altogether harmless. Among the questionnaires received by Hoffmann there are two letters from men who complain that for a long time they were in ignorance as to what was sinful in this regard. One of them wrote:

> Even when I was fourteen I was not at all clear about the sins against the Sixth Commandment. For instance, I considered sinful any looks, touches, and imagining of the nude posteriors. When I was in fifth-year Latin I privately asked our teacher of religion how he could reconcile it with the teachings of the catechism that in our chapel we had an 'immoral picture.' The immorality of the picture consisted in the nude back of an angel! It is things like these that I confessed as sins for years. But that was not the worst feature. Much worse was the fact that my lively fancy was often occupied with these matters as being forbidden and therefore excited the passions. My whole emotional life was poisoned in consequence, and I had to fight many a battle that taxed both my mental and bodily strength, in the effort to keep my passions under control.[16]

It is obvious that experiences such as these may readily lead to complexes for life. Fortunately, most of our young people are strong enough to throw off unfavorable impressions; but in some cases dreadful scrupulosity will result in consequence. While grace is powerful, we must not neglect the natural means of proper instruction to prevent these mental disturbances.

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* Cf. *infra,* p. 419.

[16] *Handbuch der Jugendkunde und Jugenderziehung,* Freiburg, 1922, pp. 211-212.

A Catholic physician reports tragic consequences resulting from the policy of forcing young people to get their sex knowledge from the street. He finds among his patients that some conceived an aversion for their parents that continued for years. Others conceived a horror of all sex life, became neurotic, and suffered a complete destruction of their emotional life. He also traces later sexual perversions to complexes formed by the children concerning the origin of life. He found in the case of some boys who had been uninstructed, that the first seminal emissions caused a shock that had permanent evil results; in some cases there was a complete change of personality. He also observed hallucinations, neuroses of anxiety, and dementia praecox in consequence. With girls he observed that the first experience of menstruation produced a feeling of anxiety that soon included all sexual emotions. In more than one case he got the impression that the mental disease would not have been so serious if the patient had received from her mother proper sex instruction.

It is true that most children will adjust themselves in course of time. But until the time of such adjustment, they may suffer serious harm. At least the victims of such anxious feelings will never experience the real joy of youth, and will be filled with anxious cares for years. And these sufferings will be the more intense the more delicate is the soul structure of the respective boy or girl.

HAS THE POLICY OF SILENCE PROVED A FAILURE?

We must admit that the policy of silence has been tried long enough, and who will say that it has been a success? We believe that the policy of silence has been a failure because it has not preserved purity and innocence, and because it has allowed grave evils, both hygienic and moral, to develop under the cloak of secrecy. We could quote a host of Catholic writers of our own and other countries to witness to this fact.

In France, Père Gillet, O.P., refused to accept the principle that "ignorance and piety are the two guardians of purity."[17] Dr. Pasteau, in his report to the French Association of Christian Marriage, wrote:

> There may have been a time when silence in this matter was ideal. However, at the present time silence is far from being ideal since the agencies of evil are all too eager to inform the young about the most intimate matters, and it is no longer possible to preserve the innocence of our boys and girls through ignorance. If we ourselves do not inform the young people, they will acquire all their sex knowledge from evil companions, immoral books, vile movies, and shameless advertisements of all kinds.

In Germany, Father Hardy Schilgen, S.J., writes:

> We must be honest enough to admit that our education to purity has not been successful generally. If we accept the statistics furnished by physicians—and everyone familiar with modern conditions knows them to be true—we must admit sad failures. And hence we are confronted with the dilemma: either chastity of the young is im-

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[17] *Innocence and Ignorance*, New York, 1917, p. 112.

> possible, or we have failed with our educational methods. We cannot admit the former, and hence we are compelled to conclude that our educational methods have been defective.[18]

Even the famous 1908 Pastoral of the German Bishops prohibits only class instruction in sex matters or premature enlightenment, and while making it plain that enlightenment alone is insufficient, it recommends that the necessary sex instruction should be given privately by the parents, the teacher, or the priest. Some twenty years ago Fathers Gatterer and Krus, Jesuit professors at the University of Innsbruck, complained that there prevailed throughout central Europe an altogether false conception of the sexual life, and for this they blamed in great part the silence of preachers and other Christian defenders of the truth, as well as the general prudery which affects a horror of words quite proper or even necessary regarding things sexual.[19]

As to conditions in Ireland we may refer to the priest-author of *Quid vobis videtur?*,[20] who admits that the policy of silence has failed and therefore pleads for sex instruction for the young. *The Difficult Commandment* by Father Martindale, S.J., is significant of the need felt in England for timely sex instruction. In Rome we find Father Arthur Vermeersch, S.J., professor of moral theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University, arriving at the following conclusion, after reviewing Catholic discussion and experience on the subject: "It can be unhesitatingly affirmed that there is need of sex instruction. The only serious question is: what is the best time and manner of giving it?''[21]

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[18] *Um die Reinheit der Jugend*, Düsseldorf, 1927, p. 5.

[19] *Educating to Purity*, New York, 1927, pp. 17-19.

[20] Dublin, 1923, pp. 3-4.

In our own country priests would seem to be quite generally agreed that our policy of silence has failed, and that we must therefore provide proper sex instruction for the young. In the questionnaire sent to 500 pastors in different sections of the country, we included the following question: *In view of present-day dangers to chastity, do you think it necessary that our youth be instructed in sex matters?* Answers were received from 368, and of these 349 replied ''yes,'' while the answers of 19 were as follows: the catechism will suffice (10); no more than the confessional will be required (5); sex instruction might make matters worse (4).

Cardinal Gibbons felt the need of a properly graded course of sex instruction. He was asked by Dr. J. J. Carroll, a physician, whether he approved of warning our young people about the dangers of venereal diseases. The Cardinal replied:

''Why not? You know as a physician that these diseases exist. I know as a priest that they exist. It is your duty to combat them in your way as a physician, as it is my duty to combat them in my way as a priest. They are enemies, and you cannot fight an enemy to advantage in the dark.''

''At what age, Your Eminence, should such instruction begin?'' asked Dr. Carroll. ''At the age of puberty,'' answered Cardinal Gibbons without hesitation. ''At that age the sex instinct begins to manifest itself; so at that age the proper instruction should be given, and instruction leading up to this point should begin before that.''[22]

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[21] *De castitate,* Rome, 1919, p. 198.

Pope Pius XI, while condemning the naturalism that expects salvation from mere enlightenment, and while disapproving of class instruction in sex matters, does not deny that there may be need at times of sex instruction, but insists that when such instruction is given the necessary precautions must always be taken:[23] ''In this extremely delicate matter, if, all things considered, some private instruction is found necessary and opportune, from those who hold from God the commission to teach and who have the grace of state, every precaution must be taken.''

At a time when vice flaunted itself less in public than is the case in our day, there may have been some reason for the policy of silence. But with the brazen and public appeal of sin on all sides, there must be a strong offensive. To quote the reviewer of Father Lord's *The Pure of Heart*:[24] ''In other days silence on the subject may have been proper in Catholic writers and teachers. To keep silence now would be treachery to our Catholic youth. They are exposed daily to the absorption of altogether false ideas from their reading and the conversation of their companions.'' In the June, 1929, issue of the *Salesianum*, published at St. Francis' Seminary, Milwaukee, Wis., we read: ''Ignorance no longer can be regarded as a safeguard of virtue; if innocence is to survive under our present living conditions, it must be fortified by knowledge. To give this indispensable information is the imperative duty of parents. The neglect of this duty may have the most tragic consequences." The *Monitor*, the official organ of the Archdiocese of San Francisco, says in its issue of June 1, 1929: "It is quite evident that a lot of sin and many bad habits result from the puritan care this subject [sex instruction] has received at the hands of the grown-ups who should have known better."

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[22] *Social Hygiene*, April, 1921, p. 158.

[23] *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*, p. 23.

[24] *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, May, 1928.

What Father Joseph Schröteler, S.J., says of conditions in Germany is just as true of the situation in our country:

> Under present-day conditions it will no longer do in our dealings with the young to be silent on this important subject. The subject can no longer be ignored. The young people must realize that we know of their struggle, and that we are ready and able to assist them in the fight. At the proper time it will be necessary to discuss the subject with them quite frankly, though we shall, of course, not kill it with talk. Our young people must realize that the teacher respects the mysteries of life, and that he regards it as a sacred duty to assist the young in getting control of their sex life.[25]

Sin is flaunted so publicly in our day that all who are interested in the education of the young must be eager to fortify the growing generation against the dangers that they cannot possibly avoid. It is not possible for the chaste to escape from the corruption of the modern world to an island where there would be no evil. The haven of refuge must be established in the heart of the individual. To establish such an anchorhold, it will be necessary not only to train the will but also to inform the mind as to the dangers that the young must inevitably face. However, is it not true that the prudery that still prevails to a great extent in our homes is apt to encourage morbid curiosity and pruriency? Would it not be more wise for parents to speak at the proper time quite frankly about certain subjects instead of leaving everything to the secretiveness and the fanciful imaginings of the young?

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[25] "Die Revolution der modernen Jugend" in: *Stimmen der Zeit*, Oct., 1928, p. 16.

It may be that the policy of silence is to some extent responsible for the large number of Catholic women who are consulting birth control clinics. The statistics of the American Birth Control League for the year 1924 report that 4,000 women received contraceptive advice; 33 per cent of the women applying were Protestant, 32 per cent were Catholic, and 31 per cent were Jewish. The Executive Secretary of the Illinois Birth Control League is authority for the statement that, since the beginning of the work of the League in 1924, 3,353 cases applied for information. Of these, 1,854 were Protestant, 1,046 Catholic, 388 Jewish, and 62 were of other religions or the religion was not stated.[26] These women were probably not given the proper instruction when they were girls. Whatever sex information they obtained was largely gotten from unsavory sources, and hence they were habituated not to depend upon proper authorities for their knowledge. If their legitimate curiosity had been satisfied in a proper way all through the course of their development, would they now turn to the Birth Control League for advice?

Hans Wegener contrasts the measures taken to insure economic protection with the gross neglect of physical and moral health as represented by the policy of silence in the face of even the most serious situation:

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[26] *Thought,* Dec., 1928, p. 383.

> The law of heredity, of vice-transmission is the most dreadful verification of the ancient warning: "The fathers' sins shall be visited on the children until the third and the fourth generation" (Num., XIV, 18). And what of the bestial rudeness of those young men who know they are syphilitic, and yet marry? I will simply say that the whipping-post should be reintroduced for them. . . . Some years ago when our cattle had the foot and mouth disease, a poster was put up at all the farms so affected. Cattle were thus protected against contagion, but our women and the future generation must be immolated to the horrible virus of venereal diseases.[27]

The social evil and the social diseases are so widespread that, with the policy of silence, morals have become corrupted and health has been irreparably ruined in some cases several years before puberty. The pathway that leads to health and morals is in beginning betimes with the individual and instructing him gradually as the problems of sex come forward in his life.

WHY THE POLICY OF SILENCE?

In view of the fact that the policy of silence has failed, we may be justified in asking: Why does this policy still prevail so generally? Fathers Gatterer and Krus believe that even proper sex instruction meets with opposition chiefly because of the difficulty found in giving such information. Father Hardy Schilgen, S.J., agrees that most of the objections to proper sex instruction are not really objective, but represent a form of defense reaction. Parents do not know how to express themselves properly, and, in fact, do not like to discuss the subject at all with the young folks. In general, the excuse is offered that the information will be given later. But if we ask the parents as to *when* they intend to instruct their children, we shall discover that the procrastination is an effort to shirk the unpleasant duty.

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[27] Gatterer-Krus, *Educating to Purity*, New York, 1927, pp. 39-40.

If we examine all possible reasons for silence, we shall discover that most of them are reducible either to cowardice, or ignorance of the facts on the part of the parents, and the best way to present them, or an easy-going creed (arising largely from both cowardice and ignorance) that sex ignorance makes for innocence and chastity, and that the knowledge of sex facts must bring harmful results. Yet it is evident that at the present day parents have with regard to this subject no longer the choice between ignorance and knowledge. The only choice is between the incomplete and distorted information that may be picked up from companions, and the sound, accurate knowledge given by those who know; between secret and open knowledge, between suggestive knowledge given in impure and vulgar ways, and clean, pure information, graded step by step to the needs of the individual, and connected in his mind with the great normal human values in his own family and in life about him. The sex-impulses are too strong, the facts of sex are too widely known, and human curiosity is too great for the policy of silence to secure its end, even if ignorance were best. The very conditions that make it certain that our young people will get some sort of knowledge make it necessary that they should have it in the best possible form, without the over-emphasis either of neglect or of stress. The young people need the knowledge and are entitled to it.

We realize what an effort it must be for most parents to break this silence and to answer frankly the questions of their children and to offer them the information they will need later according to their growing needs. But let them consider the reaction on the part of the child if he discovers that he may not ask his parents about this subject, or that his questions are ignored. The child will be driven to conceal what he has observed and heard elsewhere on the subject, and he will be compelled to satisfy his curiosity elsewhere. It is here where a serious danger faces the child. Indeed, the whole scheme of parental control may go to pieces in consequence. The child will discover that his parents, who have been so anxious about his every other need, fail him on this score where the riddles are so puzzling, where the temptations are so powerful, and where corruption is beckoning on so many sides. May he not be driven to argue: If my parents fail me on a subject where I am altogether at sea, and where my own body with its urges is so powerful and insistent a factor, may I depend upon them in other matters? Do the realities of life make demands upon me that neither the catechism nor the home can satisfy?

Some parents allege as a reason for their silence the fear of scandal. This again is a defense reaction. A little reflection should convince them that when they talk about "giving scandal" by proper instruction of their children, they are, putting matters at their worst, shocking a certain false sense of shame—and this is quite a different thing from the meaning that the catechism attaches to the word "scandal."

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF PROPER SEX INSTRUCTION?

No, there need be no fear of scandal in the case of sex instruction given at the proper time, by the proper person, and in the proper way. We may apply to such instruction what Coventry Patmore says of plain speaking: "Plain speaking does not vitiate. Even coarseness is health compared with those suppressed forms of the disease of impurity which come of our undivine silences."

No, there will be no scandal, but reverence and affection for the parents if the sex instruction has been given properly. I have the statements of forty men who admit that the proper sex instruction given by their parents increased their reverence for father and mother. The story related by Père Gillet[28] illustrates a general law. A mother whose son, about sixteen years of age, had to leave home for the university, one day took him aside. "My child," she said in substance, "you are soon to leave us for surroundings that are not at all like home. Certainly, in this environment, if you are not prepared, you will learn things that I do not want you to learn from anyone but me." And she then placed before him, with admirable simplicity, the difficult problem of the sexes. For reply, the young man, more moved by this confidence of his mother than by what he had heard, put his arms around her neck and embraced her. Since then he has given her an affection and recognition of which his father might well be jealous; for it is to his mother, and to the revelations she made, that he owes his safety.

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[28] Gillet-Ross, *Innocence and Ignorance,* New York, 1917, pp. 172-173.

But if the information is obtained in a vulgar way, it may well happen that the children lose respect for their parents because of the vile manner in which the wonderful story of procreation has been presented. Father Hardy Schilgen, S.J., gives an account of an incident that illustrates the frequent need of re-interpreting the story of procreation to restore the confidence lost in consequence of a vile presentation. He gave a conference to boys on the mother's dignity, and the next morning he was delighted to hear of one unexpected result of his talk. The mother of one of the lads called on him to inform the priest that his talk had restored her boy's confidence in his mother. The maid had taken it unto herself to tell the facts of life in a vile way to her son and daughter, and the information had destroyed the pleasant relationship that had always existed between the mother and her children. But after the priest's talk the boy came home to his mother, and. eyes radiant with joy, he confessed: "Now I know that the maid was not telling me the truth; and now I can love you again." The mother begged the priest to talk to her daughter also, and as a result of the interview the girl, too, again gave her confidence to her mother.

Indeed, the fact that the parents impart the instruction will beget confidence and mutual trust between them and their children. The child will realize that his parents are his best friends and his safest councilors in all difficulties. Père Gillet, O.P., tells of a mother who has six children, ranging from ten to seventeen years of age. She has instructed all, even the youngest as to the way in which children come into the world, and when asked about the impression these revelations had made upon the spirit of her daughters, she explained: "An excellent impression. The youngest, in particular, was so enraptured that she cried out: 'When I am grown I shall have many children, because now I know they will be good to me.'" The mother also explained that the children were satisfied with her explanation and that they did not seek to know more. The reason was that the mother had accustomed her children never to seek elsewhere for information, nor for more than she told them. The children were convinced that the mother had told them the truth, and that the rest would not concern them.

I consulted a Catholic physician who has a long record of faithful service in a Catholic boarding school for boys, and he offers the following as his convictions in the matter:

> The proper instruction should remove the veil of fascinating mystery—always a strong incentive to sin—which Satan so cleverly makes use of in the field of sex. Again, most boys have drawn their ideas of sex life from polluted sources; proper information should reconstruct these sex ideas, and this is most necessary in the case of adolescents. After much reflection upon the matter, I have come to the following conclusions: (1) In general, those boys who have formed the habit of masturbation deplore the fact that they were not instructed and warned in time; (2) a few who were instructed, seem to feel a bit resentful towards the one who instructed them, the reason being that they believe that the instruction has caused them to have more "trouble" with "thoughts"—still, they always concede that the instruction has made them stronger in keeping from bad actions. And for this

> help, i.e., for having been given strength to fight off the temptation to bad actions, others are very grateful. I know of no case under my observation (and I have tried to follow up all cases as far as possible) where instruction properly given has led to bad actions. I know of only one case where the knowledge imparted was abused by a boy, who discussed the subject in a frivolous manner with his companions. However, even in this case there were no immoral actions in consequence.

Another physician who has had extensive experience with boys writes: "Few boys are willing to credit instruction alone for stopping bad habits; many admit it aroused them to the danger and brought them to use the means of grace and natural helps to overcome bad practices."

We should not be surprised at these favorable results. The young people have a right to the sex knowledge in keeping with their age, and no good can come from withholding that to which they have a just claim. How many young people have charged their elders with gross neglect on this score: "Why was I not told betimes of all these dangers! I was at sea, and why did I have to listen to vulgar playmates or turn to encyclopedias to satisfy my eagerness to find out?"

A boy of eighteen wrote to a priest: "I was almost beside myself at times with prying into these puzzling questions, but I could not get satisfaction. Now that I have been to see you, I am perfectly clear on the subject. Now I know what I am to do in the matter." Another boy who admitted that a vile book had been his source of information, wrote: "Well, it was a vile book that I had to turn to for the information that my parents or teachers should have given to me. I will not blame my parents. They acted in accordance with what they thought their duty in the matter. But how often have I cursed that false standard of propriety that out of a mistaken sense of modesty could not get itself to talk frankly with a young person on this important subject. The best years of my youth were poisoned in consequence.'' Another boy, unspoiled, remarked to a priest: ''While you were explaining the Sixth Commandment so clearly I was so happy that I could have embraced the whole world.''

One of the leading Catholic educationists of Germany, Father Alban Stolz, insists frequently in his writings upon the need of sex instruction. He acknowledges that he knew of many young people who contracted bad habits into which they would not have fallen if they had been instructed betimes, and insists that he did not know of a single case where sex instruction given in the proper manner ever brought harm to any young person. He thinks it a shrewd game of the devil to deceive parents and priests into believing that the best safeguard against the sins of impurity is not to mention the subject to young people. Even in his day he found it strangely inconsistent that parents and priests should keep silent on the subject and allow the young people to get all their sex information from contaminated sources.

Father Joseph Jungmann, S.J., agrees with Alban Stolz that the policy of silence will have but one result: Children will conceal these sins in confession as they do not know how to confess them, or they believe that such things cannot and may not be mentioned in a decent way, or because their conscience is not sensitized regarding this subject. The concealing of mortal sins may thus go on for years until the situation brings them down to the chambers of eternal death.[29]

Father J. Hoffmann sent questionnaires on the subject to Catholic gymnasium graduates, and all men who answered declared that proper sex instruction would have greatly benefited them at the time of their adolescence.[30] An army chaplain reported during the World War that he found sex instruction helpful among the men: "Men must know before they can do better. One must know what to avoid before he can avoid it. This is one place where we do not want men to learn through personal experience, but through the experience of others." [31]

It stands to reason that some good results must follow if the mind is forestalled against the attacks of the sex instinct. The mind should have a clear knowledge of what may be expected, lest the soul be taken by surprise by the first attack of the enemy. Dr. James E. Peabody quotes the letter of a young man written to his father in which he reports that it was the instruction given him by his father that saved him in a tempting situation on board a ship.[32] All the seniors but one in a German *gymnasium* had committed serious offenses against purity. The Rector questioned the one who had remained free of guilt as to what had saved him. The boy explained that his mother had instructed him about how he had been born, and in consequence he entertained such high regard for all women that he would never dare to commit any unseemly action with any girl.[33]

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[29] *Theorie der geistlichen Beredsamkeit,* Vol. II, Freiburg, 1886, p. 222.

[30] *Handbuch der Jugendkunde und Jugenderziehung,* Freiburg, 1922, p. 192.

[31] *Social Hygiene,* Oct., 1918, p. 446.

[32] *Some Experiments in Sex Education in the Home and High School,* New York, 1921, p. 5.

Dr. Max J. Exner reported while he was the medical secretary of the Y.M.C.A. that a great reduction of venereal diseases had followed sex-hygienic campaigns in college towns.[34] The study made by Mr. W. L. Hughes in North Carolina reports 94 per cent of the boys as stating that they found sex instruction effectual to some extent.[35]

Priests should be keenly alive to the good that may be accomplished by proper sex instruction. The experiences of the confessional, when a word about the seriousness of certain sins is often enough to change the ways of both old and young, should lead them to expect even more salutary results from the instruction if given before the fall. The author of *Quid vobis videtur?*[36] rightly asks as to what is present when they rise from sin that was not there before. Nothing except that the youths heard words of warning and as a result they saw the enormity of the sin in a new light. It is, of course, a fair argument to say that what has been effective *after* their fall, when most of the other conditions are unfavorable, would have been at least equally effective *before* the fall, when these same conditions were favorable, and, being such, would have given greater point and potency to the words of warning. Or, to put it briefly, what has helped them to rise should, according to right reason, have been equally effective in preventing their fall.

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[33] Franz Walter, *Die sexuelle Aufklärung der Jugend,* Donauwoerth, 1907.

[34] M. A. Bigelow, *Sex Education,* New York, 1924, p. 44.

[35] "Sex Experiences of Boyhood," in: *Journal of Social Hygiene,* May, 1926, p. 273.

[36] Dublin, 1923, pp. 4-5.

But there is a more serious aspect to this line of reasoning. The same writer follows up the argument when he asks what of those who fall never to return, or, if they do recover from time to time, only to fall back again? If we find that warnings and instructions are now of such little help in their case, must we necessarily conclude that warnings and instructions would have been equally ineffective if given before the very first fall? What would have been the result had this class of youthful sinners been warned in time? No man knows. God alone knows with certainty. Still, we know this much, that the great chance of saving them was lost when the devil, whilst they slept in ignorance of what the vice of impurity meant, came and, in the sleep of ignorance, stripped them of the armor of virtue. Then act upon act knit around them a vicious habit, which adhered to them as a garment; nay, more than a garment—for is not habit a second nature? Or, if we would believe William James, it is stronger than nature. True, a zealous confessor is anxious to encourage and coax young people back to perseverance, if only from week to week, to try and get working on their side the force of habit, even though it be but the feeble habit of a sickly convalescence. What would not that confessor now give for the golden time before that fatal first fall? But alas! too late. How comes it that innocence, like health, is often duly appreciated only when it is lost?[37]

Yes, innocence and ignorance—the combination may be tragic. Father Ross, in his introduction to his translation of Père Gillet's *Innocence and Ignorance* gives a striking illustration from real life. A young woman of eighteen or so, educated in a convent, was persuaded by her mother to marry a certain man who was considered in society to be in every way a desirable "catch." What was her horror to find what marriage really meant—the essence of a contract she had made as an act of filial piety! After months of bitter degradation with a diseased brute, she left the man and is now supporting herself by hard work. Had she not been ignorant as well as innocent, she would never have entered into any such agreement with any man, much less with this particular one. She would have consecrated herself to God in some religious community. Now she cannot. Her life is ruined. Convents are closed to her, and she must even bear the stigma of being a divorcee. Such cases are unfortunately not at all rare. Mr. Herbert D. Williams, writing on "The Problem Girl and Her Problems,"[38] says: "Probably the most serious problem which the young girl meets is that of facing adolescence without proper and adequate sex information. I am unable to recall a case of sex delinquency where the girl was properly informed about sex matters by her mother." The author goes on to say that such half-truths or misinformation obtained from evil-minded boys and girls is worse than no information at all, and will only serve to arouse "unhealthy interest in, and morbid curiosity about, sex matters."

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[37] *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10; cf. *infra*, p. 268.

THE PRACTICE OF THE CHURCH

The practice of the Church has never been one of absolute silence, but one that called for a duly graded course of instruction. Even the babbling child is expected to learn to recite the Hail Mary and the Angelus. A teacher in charge of the eighth grade of a girls' school was explaining the Gospel of the last Sunday of the ecclesiastical year. When dealing with the text: "Woe to them that are with child, and that give suck in those days," she asked the girls for the meaning of the phrase "that are with child." Two girls volunteered to answer. One being asked for her answer, said: "They are mothers." The answer satisfied the teacher and apparently the class also. In case no satisfactory answer would have been forthcoming, the teacher would have been permitted to offer a brief explanation, for instance, to say: "Mothers who expect the birth of a baby." [39]

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[38] *Welfare,* Jan.-Feb., 1929.

When preparing young children for confession, priests and Sisters train them to be earnest in examining their thoughts, words, and actions, and to be frank and sincere in revealing their findings to their confessor. In this practice the Church follows the policy of the Bible, which is frank in dealing with natural things. The Church realizes that when the little ones first begin to recite the Hail Mary they will not understand the import of all the words, but she trusts that with the years the very consecration of the prayerful terms will help the children to keep sacred the facts of motherhood as related in the prayer.

The Church scorns no helpful means in her crusade of combating vice and promoting virtue, and statistics show that the most faithful Catholics are everywhere the purest people on earth—witness the Irish and the Spanish—and she does not fail to recognize the aid that may be obtained from a source of instruction that is properly graded.

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[39] Cf. E. Ernst, *Elternpflicht: Beiträge zur Erziehung der Jugend zur Sittenreinheit*, Kevelaer, 1906, pp. 105-106.

We believe that Father Matthew A. Michel, O.S.B., has well described the basic principles of the Church's policy in this matter:

> The Catholic Church has not pointed out definitely the course of action we are to follow, or the method we are to use in the matter of sex instruction. Christ has laid down the law, but, though the Church has ever had and ever will have but one and the same doctrine throughout the ages, she will ever face the problem of adjusting her methods and discipline to the needs of the times, to the prevailing circumstances and the particular place. The Church has never been rash or hasty to discard, and, if she has been usually conservative under the stress of changing social conditions, this policy is to her undying credit. What she has always taught in this particular matter is that clean living is a safeguard of bodily health and a conservation of physical strength; that it is a necessary condition for a happy wedlock and life eternal; and that everything contrary to purity is sinful. The Catholic Church has never advocated ignorance in matters of science and learning, nor does she teach that ignorance in the field of sex is innocence any more than she teaches that knowledge is virtue. That is a pagan idea conceived and propagated by Socrates.[40]

Alban Stolz relates that he found in his travels in Spain a deeper reverence for motherhood than he had noted anywhere else. Upon investigating into the causes for this reverence, he decided it must be because there was no prudery in dealing with the facts of life. He believed that early Christian traditions had endured more faithfully in Spain than in any other country, and hence people discussed the origin of life in a natural way, and fostered none of the prudery that Stolz blamed for much of the unwholesome curiosity of the young.[41]

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[40] *Sex Education in the Catholic High School*, Washington, D. C., 1929.

Hence we are right in saying that the efforts made by priests in our country to provide proper instruction for our young people have the sanction of Catholic tradition. Pope Pius XI recalls the Catholic traditions in the matter when he speaks, in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*, of the individual instruction to be given at the right moment by those "who hold from God the commission to teach and who have the grace of state."

When social hygiene associations were first organized in our country, Cardinal Gibbons was a moving spirit in their progress. Father Alphonse M. Schwitalla, S.J., dean of the St. Louis University School of Medicine, and President of the Missouri Social Hygiene Association, and the Rev. Dr. John M. Cooper, associate professor of sociology in the Catholic University of America, have contributed vastly to the program of proper enlightenment. At a meeting of the American Social Hygiene Association held in Chicago, October 16, 1928, Father Schwitalla made the opening address. He clearly outlined the Catholic position on the question of sex education, showing how knowledge without character training is of little value. He indicated how the Catholic schools had the advantage over others in the field of social hygiene, although he admitted their tendency to neglect the knowledge phase of this problem.

However, because of the increasing dangers of immorality, the Catholic position has undergone a marked modification within the past few years, and it is no longer thought to be the part of discretion to leave all admonition in these matters to the confessor, who as a rule can only intervene after harm has been done. Our priests are meeting the new dangers by producing a new literature on the subject. The new literature is more explicit, and in this regard is meeting a real need, as the Rev. Dr. Paul H. Furfey, who is the author of valuable educational literature, remarks in a letter written to the author of *Watchful Elders:* "I felt long that our books on sex education needed to be more explicit if they were to be useful."

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[41] *Die christliche Frau,* Jan., 1904, p. 133.

The Rev. C. Van der Donckt brought out in 1912 an English translation of Gatterer-Krus' *Educating to Purity* with an appendix dealing with American conditions. There was some criticism of the book as being too plain, but other competent authorities declared that plain speech was needed. The Rev. Dr. Thomas Edward Shields, for instance, wrote to the translator: "Your book is very valuable and will do much good."

The Rev. Dr. J. Elliott Ross brought out in 1917 an English translation of *Innocence and Ignorance* by Père M. S. Gillet, O.P. The book describes the harm done by so-called scientific instruction, exposes the danger of the policy of giving no instruction, and advises that the necessary sex information be given after the will has been re-enforced by discipline.

In his booklet *Sex Education in the Home*, published in 1922, the Rev. Dr. John M. Cooper deals briefly but clearly with the part that the parents have in the matter. The author brought out plainly what sex knowledge should be imparted by the parents, and discussed also the time and the methods for imparting the "facts of life." In the second part of the booklet Dr. Cooper dealt with the means to be employed in developing the character of children to cope with the problem of sex.

Boyland Bridge (1927) is a book on purity for boys. The book will be helpful, but does not go nearly far enough in its treatment of the subject. It would be more useful if it were more specific in dealing with the problems that confront boys.

Father Fulgence Meyer, O.F.M., has published several valuable books on the subject. *Plain Talks on Marriage* (1927) consists of frank and intimate talks on married life, its rights and duties, its virtues and sins, and is intended for people who are married, or who are about to be married. *Youth's Pathfinder* (1927) is a book of heart-to-heart chats with young men and young women. Father Meyer brought out in 1929 *Helps to Purity* and *Safeguards of Chastity*; the first is intended for adolescent girls and the second for adolescent boys. The two books present frank, yet reverent, instruction on the intimate matters of personal life.

The Rev. Daniel A. Lord, S.J., brought out in 1928 the pamphlet *The Pure of Heart*; it is written for young men and women and deals in story form with the subject of chastity.

The Rev. Kilian J. Hennrich, O.M.Cap., published in 1929 his *Watchful Elders*, in which he gives parents, priests, and teachers the material that may well be used in explaining to children "the mystery of procreation, the secrets of sex, and the beauty of the virtue of purity."

These publications represent some of the work done by priests to meet an urgent need, and evidence plainly the growing realization that new efforts must be made to preserve the chastity of our Catholic people. Equally significant is the cordial welcome given by Catholic reviewers to all recent Catholic books on the subject. We should like to refer particularly to the review of one writer, the Rev. Augustine Bomholt, an outstanding authority on the Catholic boy problem. Father Bomholt at one time advocated the policy of silence, and now urges us to break that silence in order to save our young people. Father Bomholt confesses that he found it necessary to modify his negative attitude and to say now that, "unfortunately, in too many cases reason and justice demand speech. It is folly to deny or to conceal an unpleasant truth simply because it happens to be unpleasant. And the unvarnished truth is that the underlying causes of the juvenile problem are moral." Father Bomholt finds that the boy problem is, at bottom, a sex problem, and urges Catholic social workers and the clergy to reconcile themselves to that truth:

> Twenty-five years of study of this problem and personal contacts with thousands of lads in juvenile courts and outside of them has confirmed me in the conviction that these disorders are begotten by ignorance (as a rule the older ones corrupting the younger), continued in weakness, because as passion increases, the will power diminishes, and very frequently end in apostasy. I fully realize that it is an unpleasant task for anybody to impart proper instruction to the young concerning this exceedingly delicate subject. An excellent opportunity is presented to the priest in the confessional, to dispel

ignorance, to admonish, to warn, but alas, time is so precious, and others are waiting. . . .[42]

As the confessional therefore will often prove inadequate for the purpose of imparting the necessary instruction, the writer commends Father Fulgence Meyer for bringing out his two books of sex information to meet the needs of the young. Father Bomholt finds that the Franciscan Friar communicates "the necessary information sympathetically, prudently, and comprehensively to boys and girls of the present time, who, after all, are more sinned against than sinning." A similar review of the two books of Father Meyer was published in the *Acolyte*, under the title "Sex Instruction for Catholic Youth."[43]

Our new Catholic literature on the subject of training in chastity, as well as the attitude of Catholic reviewers and our priests generally, allows only one conclusion: we are realizing the need of new efforts to save our young people from the immorality that is rampant to-day. We are recognizing that the passive policy of silence cannot be considered an observance of the whole law, but that we must be active in instructing our young people. To remain silent to-day would be to abandon the young to the teaching of sensualists, who speak to them with a thousand tongues by word and deed, as well as through the press, on the street, in many a school, and even in their very homes.

The evidence in support of the need of sex instruction would seem to be overwhelming. We have examined the extensive literature on the subject, have examined the results of several scientific surveys,[44] have conducted extensive inquiries of our own, and all findings call for this conclusion—the need of proper sex instruction.[45] All investigations, whether conducted by non-Catholics or Catholics, arrive at the same conclusion. Of course, there are variations in detail, yet the main conclusion is so pronounced that it is inconceivable that more extended investigation would change the result.

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[42] "Sex Hygiene," in: *Fortnightly Review*, St. Louis, Sept., 1929, p. 230.

[43] March 9, 1929.

Probably the best summary of the reasons advanced for the need of sex instruction is that presented by Father Vermeersch, S.J.:

> 1. All knowledge is useful for its own sake. There is no reason why we should be ashamed of any God-given faculty. [This argument is generally advanced by non-Catholics].
>
> 2. Sex knowledge is necessary in order that the youth may understand the reason for his obligations, for only in this way will he be formally chaste. [This is the argument advanced by the Dominican Gillet and the Jesuit Castillon].
>
> 3. The Church is very plain in sex matters, witness her formula of the Hail Mary and her treatment of the subject in the Sixth and Ninth Commandments.
>
> 4. In many ways the young people are impelled to ask questions about sex matters, about the passions, and about reproduction. If parents do not satisfy the curiosity of the young, the latter will, impelled by the restless curios-

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[44] In addition to those mentioned previously, we should like to refer also to the Davis study (*Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-Two Hundred Women*, New York, 1929, pp. 378-379) and to the survey made by Dr. T. W. Galloway, the results of which are published in his *Biology of Sex*, New York, 1922, pp. 11-16.

[45] As to the details of what we consider *proper* sex instruction, we must refer the reader to what will be said in Chapters VI to IX.

ity of their age, seek enlightenment elsewhere. They will consult either books or their companions, and the latter are not infrequently so corrupt that they will give the requested information in such a way as to disclose nothing of the noble ends of the Creator, or the sublime designs of Providence, or of the respective personal obligation: in a word, they will impart nothing that will sublimate the subject. Thus, the youth will be lacking all positive instruction in chastity, and will be thrown, in this most delicate matter, upon his own and his companions' resources. And, of course, no one would approve of leaving our adolescents to themselves with regard to this most important matter.

5. It does not require much thought to realize that the young cannot long remain ignorant in sex matters when we consider what is exposed to the public gaze in streets and in stores, what is written up in books and periodicals, and what is read by all.

6. Sex knowledge properly imparted will render the very sense of shame more conscious, more intelligent, and more meritorious.

7. There are not a few youths who by mere chance, for instance, while exercising, or in sleep, or through the perverting influence of some companion, experience the sensual pleasure, and begin to indulge therein, and thus contract through these material sins the habit that in itself is so pernicious and so persistent. Others are frightened by the nocturnal emissions whose nature they do not understand, fear for their health and consequently grow depressed and suffer the ill effects all through their life. It may happen, too, that quacks will confirm them in their worst fears and mulct them of their money. [Father Vermeersch refers, in a note, to a fraudulent concern in the United States that obtained more than a thousand letters from boys upon the false pretense of giving them confidential advice in these matters.]

8. It is a well-known fact that many young people of

both sexes have combined a knowledge of sex matters with most innocent morals. Reliable witnesses testify that in many cases good results—or at least no harmful results—followed from proper instruction.[46]

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[46] *De castitate*, Rome, 1919, pp. 189-191.

CHAPTER VI

AT WHAT AGE WILL INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION BE NECESSARY?

We agree altogether with G. Stanley Hall when he says that forcing elaborate sex information prematurely on the young is a "kind of psychic rape." But, on the other hand, in view of the disastrous results that may follow upon ignorance or upon enlightenment coming from the wrong source, we believe, too, in the principle quoted generally by Catholic writers on the subject, "rather a year too soon than one hour too late."

Our readers are familiar with the lament that it is the young who constitute the major portion of those who fall into the hands of the police. Statistics reveal the fact that eighty per cent of the country's criminals are under twenty-five years of age, and that a large percentage are minors. The prison authorities of Sing Sing declare that the average age of the bandit is now nineteen. But in the matter of sex offenses the average age period must be placed still lower. Miss Tracy, a policewoman of Worcester, Mass., admits that nine-year-old children have told her things about sex which she did not know at forty.[1]

Still, we must not allow the statistics gathered by the police to determine the rules for dealing with the average child. It is important that we ascertain just when sex problems begin to appear in the child's life. It is vain to give instructions in these problems before children commence to be aware of them. Miss Marie Cecilia McGrath conducted a survey among 4,500 children ranging from the fifth grade through high school, and found that children revealed knowledge of certain principles at a very early age. Ideas of chastity emerged at the age of ten, and at the age of eleven to twelve both boys and girls showed regard for conventions guarding sex and an appreciation of sex differences.[2]

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[1] *Education*, Oct., 1928, p. 69.

Doctors M. W. Peck and F. L. Wells received replies from 186 male college graduates in answer to the question: *At what age do you first remember having an active interest in sex matters?* The replies are as follows:[3]

Age	Per cent of cases
6	1
7	3
8	3
9	2
10	6
11	6
12	17
13	11
14	21
15	11
16	5
17	7
18	2
19	0

[2] *A Study of the Moral Development of Children,* Princeton, N. J., 1923.

[3] "On the Psycho-Sexuality of College Graduate Men," in: *Mental Hygiene,* Oct., 1923, p. 699.

20 and over	1
Unclassifiable	2
Omitted	1

The most generally determining factor in these answers seems to be the process of puberty. The distribution shows a gradual rise to a distinct mode at fourteen years with a somewhat more rapid decline. It has been observed that fourteen is a critical year in other aspects of psycho-sexual history.*

Still, we cannot fix upon any one year as governing all cases, as may be seen from the statement made by a Catholic physician with wide experience who replied as follows to the question: *At what age do boys first become aware of their own sex life?*

> On this subject there is nothing special to add to what is found in the ordinary treatments of the subject. There is no way of knowing what proportion of boys have practiced impurities. Abnormal cases have been noted: a few of sexual intercourse at the age of five (through seduction by a woman, of course); a few of self-abuse before the age of reason; other cases of practically complete ignorance of the function of sex up to the age of sixteen or seventeen; absence of any sex stimulus up to the age of twenty-two at times—sometimes in boys who were lethargic in other matters, and again in boys who were lively, excellent students and leaders, cheerful and engaging—sometimes very devout, sometimes neglectful of religion.

We may lay it down as a principle that the choice of time for sex instruction must be guided in part by the questions of the child, in part by the child's physical maturity, but more especially by the indications of psycho-sexual development. Another important circumstance is the environment in which the child happens to be placed. We have to recognize clearly that in the development of the child the complete exclusion of the sexual stimuli is impossible. It is a well-known fact that the physical and psychical development will be more wholesome if the development of the sex life is pushed out as far as possible. However, psychical symptoms of puberty may be noted before the child is ten years old, and parents will have to act accordingly. It is a crime to expose the child to the battle of life before he is prepared for the conflict.

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* Cf. *infra*, pp. 252 ff.

MUST WE WAIT TILL PUBERTY IN ALL CASES?

Questionnaires show that some children get their first definite sex information as early as six or seven years and nearly all before the changes of puberty. Dr. Exner reports on the results of his study of early sex impressions of nearly a thousand college men that 63.9 per cent of these men had received their first permanent impressions before the eleventh year. Eighty-seven and six-tenths per cent received them before the thirteenth year. Nine and one-half years was the average age at which these first permanent impressions were received. This being the average age, it means that many received them much earlier, some as early as three years of age. And the average age at which these men received instruction about sex from wholesome sources was 15.6 years.[4]

The study made in 1920-1921 by Mr. Walter L. Hughes confirmed the findings made by Dr. Exner in 1915 by showing that nearly all children at an early age receive impressions and information which determine attitudes and behavior. The average age at which the boys in the Hughes study became "conscious of sex" was 12.5 years. In the Exner study the average age at which first permanent sex impressions were made was 9.5 years. The different results are probably due to the difference in the form of questions asked. In the Hughes study the question was: *At what age did you become conscious of sex in such a way as to have it become an item of your thought and a matter of occasional conversation?* In the Exner study the question had been: *At about what age was the subject of sex first brought in a striking way to your consciousness—that is, in such a way as to make a permanent impression?*[5]

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[4] *The Sex Factor in Character Training*, New York, 1924, pp. 5-6.

The Catholic physician quoted above[6] replied also to the following question: *At what age do Catholic boys get their principal instruction on sex matters?* He writes:

> Twelve to fifteen are the common ages, with supplementary information at sixteen and seventeen, or even later. The question "Is it a sin to kiss a girl?" or "Is petting a sin?" is the usual approach of the seeker after information. The seventh grade is commonly the period of first exchange of street information—the period in which boys previously pure and clean-minded begin using all the dirty words they can pick up, and telling stories of coarse or obscene nature. Fortunately, the very boldness and frankness of this period leads many of these boys to ask information in the confessional; many others wait

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[5] "Sex Experiences of Boyhood," in: *Journal of Social Hygiene*, May, 1926, p. 271.

[6] P. 102.

(commonly two years) to have their ideas straightened out.

It is futile to ignore facts and to proceed always as though we were dealing with normal conditions. Dr. Frederick Tracy finds that up to the age of eight or nine years there is in the mind of the child whose environment and rearing have been natural and wholesome, and whose sexual nature has not been stimulated into precocious activity by premature sentimentality, scarcely more than a suspicion of sex differences.[7] Such measure of sex-consciousness as does exist, moreover, has reference to the social rather than the physical. In this sense the sex-consciousness begins to make its influence felt even in childhood; for as soon as the period of infancy proper is passed, one may observe the first faint beginnings of that shyness of the sexes in each other's presence which afterwards becomes a distinctive feature of the relationship.

Dr. Hirschfeld is authority for the statement that 22 per cent of children commit self-abuse during the period from the fifth to the eleventh year.* The unconscious sexual life of the child may thus play a much larger rôle than has been generally believed in the past. The exhibitionism practiced during this period is considered by some an unconscious sexual act of the child.[8]

The very earliest questions of the child about the origin of babies are not sexual in themselves, but merely indicate the urge of the child to find out about his environment. It is well to keep this in mind and to answer the questions frankly, briefly, and sincerely, and not to refuse information or to attempt to divert the child's mind. Any such attempt will defeat its own purpose and will make the child suspicious and rob him of the courage to ask further from the proper authority.

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[7] *The Psychology of Adolescence*, New York, 1927, p. 143.

* Cf. *infra*, p. 251.

[8] Erich Stern, *Die Erziehung und die sexuelle Frage*, Berlin, 1927, p. 282.

From the point of view of character development, it is important that early sex information should be wholesome and come from responsible sources. Among those who answered Father Hoffmann's questionnaire, 12 per cent reported precocious sex development because of corrupting influence from their environment.[9] A Catholic investigator states that in the vast majority of cases American children apparently get more or less unreliable and vulgar information before twelve years of age, and in a great many cases it is known that morals have been corrupted and health ruined beyond repair before fourteen.[10] Dr. Exner found that 91.5 per cent of his informants had received their early sex impressions from unwholesome sources, that 80.4 per cent had received them from other boys, and only 4 per cent from their parents. Seventy-nine per cent stated that the influence of these impressions on their lives had been distinctly bad. The early impressions led for the most part to a vicious distortion and exaggeration of the whole subject, to smutty-mindedness, to precocious interest, to sinful experimentation and practices, and, subsequently, to a vast amount of fears, worries, and mental conflicts. The data derived from this and other studies leave no room for doubt as to the need of wise and timely sex instruction of the young.[11]

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[9] *Handbuch der Jugendkunde und Jugenderziehung,* Freiburg, 1922, p. 176.

[10] *Medical Essays,* Milwaukee, 1928, p. 75.

In this matter the axiom of Juvenal holds: *Nemo repente venit turpissimus*—No one became very wicked all at once. Corruption in sexual matters is a gradual process and may be forestalled by taking proper measures betimes. The precocious sex interest, whether it be intellectual or emotional, or both, makes possible a moral prophylaxis. Just as individual sex interest and knowledge outrun sexual development, and hence bring about the possibility of sexual perversions, so the precocious sex interest furnishes, on the other hand, the very best possible opportunity to *anticipate* each actual need coming to the child with the gradual onset of sex. Dr. Galloway asserts[12] that because of the mental forwardness, we are able to give emotional motives and intellectual appreciations in advance of the urge, both in time and quality, and thus, continually and pedagogically, to establish attitudes which will tend to pre-empt the ground and fortify for the need ahead of its coming. This is really a hopeful factor in the problem. Here we have the machinery for substituting the higher for the lower sex motives, and for supernaturalizing the attitudes towards the whole matter of sex. We have here an opportunity for prophylactic and tonic treatment to give protection through mastery, rather than to rely upon curative treatment during or after the onset of the sex urge.

A priest with long and extensive experience in dealing with young men was asked the question: *Do our young men think that proper sex instruction in early adolescence would be a help in getting rid of mental temptations?* The priest replied: "Almost all young men will say that they would have been glad to have *proper* sex instruction earlier, and feel that it would have protected them."

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[11] "The Sex Factor in Character Training," in: *Journal of Social Hygiene*, Oct., 1924, New York, p. 5-6.

[12] *The Responsibilities of Religious Leaders in Sex Education*, New York, 1921, pp. 12-13.

Still, we cannot ignore the views of those who insist that no sex instruction should ever be given to the child before puberty. Professor Foerster advises[13] that the parents should refuse to answer the questions of children before they are twelve years old by telling them that information will be given them on their twelfth birthday provided they will not discuss the subject with any other children. However, with the universal corruption prevailing at the present time, it is vain to expect that the children will be protected sufficiently by such treatment. Have we any assurance that the devil and evil associates will patiently wait until the child is twelve? Or will the child abide by his parents' decision? Will not their very secretiveness induce the child to get the mysterious knowledge elsewhere?

It is still more futile to lay down a general rule that parents must not inform their children before puberty. Who can tell exactly when the age of puberty is reached? For it is not the same with all. Nay, in the case of some individuals it is quick and sudden. To quote Chateaubriand: "One may go to sleep a child, and wake up a man with all the passions of a son of Adam."

And even if the precise day could be determined, we might still doubt the prudence of waiting. The priest-author of *Quid vobis videtur?*[14] advances a strong argument here: "A primary instruction given at this particular time might, by its very novelty, have the effect of inflaming passion, might indeed be as oil to the fire of concupiscence. Would it not seem better to have the novelty over while concupiscence is still dormant? and thus, knowledge coming gradually, coming slowly, will, by the time puberty is reached, have grown too trite and too stale for concupiscence to feed upon; for concupiscence, like the python, likes its food alive and fresh." To drive home his argument, the author refers to the relative immunity of city children to immodest posters, and of country children to the scenes in the barn-yard.

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[13] *Jugendlehre,* Berlin, 1919, p. 605.

The following question was asked of 500 pastors: *When should sex instruction be begun?* Replies were received from 360:

When they first ask questions	151
When they show the need	98
Whenever their conscience requires it	60
Before puberty	39
From 12-14	12

The replies clearly reveal the tendency of dealing with each case individually. The same conclusion may be drawn from the indefinite ages mentioned in the replies to the question proposed by a social worker to 200 members of a Catholic women's society: *When should a mother instruct her daughter in the mysteries of sex?* The replies ranged from the ages of ten to nineteen; but the reply "Whenever there is need" was mentioned 115 times, and "Whenever a question is asked" was mentioned 79 times.

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[14] Dublin, 1923, pp. 20-21.

It goes without saying that we are considering the needs of the normal child. There may be some children who are sexually of a psychopathic condition, who collect erotic impressions and recall them as though they were personal experiences. Any child so constituted would be abnormal and would call for special treatment. But in children who are brought up properly, sexual emotions will not be aroused before physical conditions call them forth. Hence parents should answer frankly the questions even of very young children. The youngsters will be happy over the new knowledge, as they take pleasure in all new information, and will not attach any special significance to the sex facts communicated. Truthful answers about the origin of babies may be given to the child at very early periods. Properly worded information given by the mother or the father will give no offense whatever. The information certainly must be adapted to the mentality of the child, and he should be encouraged to have full confidence in his parents and to come to them freely for any further information he may desire.

As much information as is needed for the child's personal life should be given to him before puberty. Waiting till after puberty, might find his imagination, if not also his body, contaminated by the evil. and the mystery of life might have forever lost for him the character of sacredness. We have often come across those who were ruined through lack of timely instruction, but have never known anyone harmed by early enlightenment when given by proper authority. The right moment, however, depends upon the mind, the character, and the environment of each child, and

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hence there may be no group instruction in this subject.

A priest remarked, in connection with his answer to our questionnaire, that whatever can be taught to a child relative to sex before he has arrived at puberty is just so much clear gain, for the topic can then be discussed with the utmost frankness and with no self-consciousness on the part of the child unless the parent himself betrays self-consciousness.

Two points should be observed with regard to the time for the sex instruction: (1) see to it that the child will not be helpless when confronted with the changes, physical and psychical, of adolescence; (2) give the instruction before the information is imparted by those who are not called to present it, and whose information will suggest impure pictures and desires. Another good rule is to give the child at each stage of his development just enough information to allay his curiosity, but not enough to stimulate further curiosity.

All these rules call for individualizing with regard to the time for giving the sex instruction. Investigation has disclosed the fact that the attainment of puberty is positively correlated with intelligence, and with the general quality of the organism. Dr. Terman found among intellectually gifted children in California that "of gifted girls thirteen years old or older, 48 per cent had menstruated before thirteen, as compared with 25 per cent of unselected girls." It was also ascertained that pubescence occurs earlier among gifted than among unselected boys. On the other hand, feeble-minded individuals mature relatively late.[15]

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[15] *Genetic Studies in Genius*, Stanford University, 1925.

But we need not be concerned about the exact beginning of adolescence. There is sufficient scientific evidence to assume that most people pass through a period of pre-sexual development in the period of ten to thirteen years. There is no consciousness of sex matters, yet the period may be designated as the first stage in sexual life. The puberty glands begin to function and discharge the first hormone, perhaps a sort of pre-hormone, which is qualitatively different from the later sexual hormones and which has not the effect of operating as a specifically sexual excitant; but psychically it produces an intensity of the imagination and hence predisposes for the later erotic influence at work in the child's mind. But this amorousness has a further diagnostic value as it may indicate early puberty and the early danger of self-abuse. Accompanying this amorousness we find that the children are nervous and inclined to be sentimental and gushy. Therefore there are some writers who advise that instruction should be given at this period instead of waiting for puberty.[16]

Dr. H. Rohleder distinguishes three periods in the sexual development of the child. The first period is one of subconscious or dormant sexuality. Whatever sexual acts occur are performed instinctively and are traceable to the influence of the subconscious mind. It is the period of platonic sentimentality, and extends up to the eighth year. The second period is one of transition, and the sexual instinct begins to manifest itself; it is the time of dimly felt sexual forebodings, when the sexual impulse begins to deal with specific objects. This period extends from the eighth to the twelfth year. The third period is one of fully conscious sexuality, after the twelfth year, when the concepts and impulses are clear in seeking union with another person.[17]

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[16] Cf. Stern, *Die Erziehung und die sexuelle Frage*, Berlin, 1927, p. 279.

The Report of the Committee of Three of the American Federation for Sex Hygiene divides the life of the child into four periods, namely, under six years, from six to twelve, twelve to sixteen, sixteen to maturity. However, this division has seemed too arbitrary to some, and hence we have, for instance, Dr. M. A. Bigelow making this division for the purpose of sex instruction: preadolescence (ending at eleven to fourteen); early adolescence (twelve to fifteen for girls, thirteen to seventeen for boys); later adolescence (sixteen to twenty-one for girls, eighteen to twenty-five for boys).[18]

THE NEED OF INDIVIDUALIZING

But the better judgment in the matter would seem to be that neither the physician nor the parents can know in individual cases the degree to which the child's sexual life has developed. We can no longer hold the old view that either the child's age or the external signs of puberty can be regarded as indicating with any degree of precision the progress of psycho-sexual puberty. But it is the latter, the psycho-sexual development, that should most often guide us in the choice of the right moment for instructing the child in sexual matters, and hence again we are compelled to depend upon an individual consideration of the child, such as will be possible only to a person who is fully in his confidence. It is matter of everyday experience that even very near relatives, if they have failed to penetrate the child's intimate thoughts and emotions, may have utterly erroneous conceptions of his mental life. They do not consider the extent to which the sexual imaginative faculty has already developed; they do not know whether the originally obscure sensibility of the child has now become focused in a particular direction, so that his feelings are stimulated by definite individuals; they are ignorant of the degree to which the child has experienced the physical changes incidental to puberty.[19]

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[17] *Ibid.*, p. 281.

[18] *Sex Education*, New York, 1924, p. 135.

With this uncertainty about the beginning of puberty, it is obvious that we cannot lay down a hard and fast rule as to when the instruction about the changes incident to adolescence should be given. Most writers used to lay down the rule that the instruction of boys should begin when they are fourteen. But even twenty years ago an educator who followed this rule faithfully, had to admit that he generally discovered that out of every ten boys, eight or nine were already informed.

A priest wrote recently to the author of *Safeguards of Chastity*: "I cannot for the life of me see why anyone can object to having a boy of sixteen or over know and know straight without any beating around the bush. I have yet to meet the boy of that age who does not know all about the mysteries of life and its procreation." A physician to whom we sent a copy of this letter, wrote in reply:

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[19] Cf. Albert Moll, *The Sexual Life of the Child*, London, 1923, pp. 294-295.

> I believe that the age given in the letter may well be lowered by three or four years for modern conditions. I doubt whether one healthy adolescent boy in a hundred belongs in the "innocent" class. The only kind of innocence which is of any practical value in a world full of allurements to sin is that which springs from self-control. The mere negative innocence which springs from ignorance is a source of danger, except to the very few who are privileged to lead sheltered and protected lives. And I know from my long and wide experience, under present-day conditions there is hardly one of a hundred adolescent boys who may still be negatively innocent. But, though informed, it is necessary to replace the vulgar knowledge that the average boy is likely to possess. Even our college boys welcome sex instruction for the purpose of rounding off and correcting their information.

A priest offers this suggestion: ''My opinion is that prudent questioning by the confessor will be the best guide in finding out just when the instruction should be given—this and the general impression he gathers from his penitents, using the impression gained from the franker penitents for the benefit of the more timid. Experience will be his best guide in learning how to gain the confidence of his penitents so that they will open up to his instructions.''

The Rev. Dr. Paul H. Furfey, who has written several helpful books on educational topics, advises:

> Further instruction on these matters should be given before puberty. This commonly occurs between the ages of thirteen and sixteen—probably somewhat earlier in girls than in boys. Before this time the child should be informed about the physical side of marriage. This is admittedly a difficult subject to face, but it is essential that it be discussed. At the same time the child should be taught the nature and dangers of solitary sin. The girl

> should be told frankly about menstruation and the boy about seminal emissions. Other instructions may well be postponed until adolescence, at which time the growing child should be told about the nature of venereal disease, about the physical dangers involved in promiscuity, and about the social evil.[20]

Dr. Otto Pasteau, in his Report to the Association of Christian Marriage in France, thought that in some cases the opportunity for teaching the facts of procreation would be at seven or eight, while for other children it could be delayed until eleven or twelve. Other French physicians decided that further explanation might be delayed for boys until the age of fifteen, and for girls even a little later than that.

All the evidence that we have presented would seem to prove that no definite rule can be laid down to cover all cases. Every single case must be treated individually. The important thing is to convince parents of their duty in the matter, and then to commit the choice of the proper time to their judgment. Some parents have found it advisable to offer direct opportunities to their children for the asking of questions, for example, in connection with their examination of conscience with regard to the Commandments when preparing for their first Confession. Subsequent Confessions would then provide further opportunities. In this way parents may train their children to come to them for whatever information they wish to have.

While we must warn parents, in the spirit of the *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*,[21] ‘‘not to descend to details, nor to refer to the various ways in which this infernal hydra destroys with its

[20] *You and Your Children*, New York, 1929, pp. 112-113.
[21] P. 23.

poison so large a portion of the world,'' we should not grow weary of impressing upon fathers and mothers the fact that their children will get sex information in spite of hesitating parents, and that in getting the information from the wrong sources, they get the wrong quality in the wrong quantity, with the result that their attitude is altogether wrong, and they may suffer shock and moral injury which years or even a lifetime may not be able to efface.

Even savages have realized the need of instructing the young in the intimate matters of personal life. Indian squaws in British Columbia have continued up to the present time their ancient custom of calling the Indian maiden aside to a solitary wigwam at the time of her first menstruation in order to give her some kind of instruction in ''sex hygiene.'' Is there less need in a Christian family for timely instruction?

CHAPTER VII

WHO SHALL INSTRUCT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE?

All writers on the subject of training in chastity are agreed on one point: the first duty belongs to the parents. Training in chastity is admittedly only one phase of character education as a whole and cannot be accomplished at any one time, but must be a progressive process of care, guidance, instruction, and example. This fact, together with the intimate relationship of the members of the family, places upon the home the chief responsibility during the earlier years. Though there is an exaggeration in what Jean Paul says: "Education should be completed by the time the child is three years old," still it is true that he who has the education of the child up to seven years of age shapes the whole subsequent life of the child. Tennyson is right in saying that we are part of all we meet, and hence there is not only the factor of heredity but of early environment as well that places the duty and privilege of early training in chastity upon the parents.

We all realize the imperative need of mutual confidence between parents and children, and we can easily conclude that proper training in chastity on the part of father and mother will furnish one condition for this feeling of mutual trust. Parents have only themselves to blame if their adolescent boys and girls will not confide in them. Parents of adolescents cannot even guess at times what the young people are thinking. And what may be the reason? The parents, by keeping aloof from some of the most urgent problems of the children, have lost the opportunity of habituating the young people to come to them for guidance and direction. How could parents hope to enjoy the confidence of a boy during his adolescence when they have repulsed his anxious questioning about his most personal problems during the earlier years? It is during his early adolescence of twelve to fourteen that a mother's or a father's heart-to-heart guidance will influence the boy more than all the education that schools and colleges combined could offer in this direction.

In the earliest years there is no other agency to answer the curious questions of children, and if sex is to remain a family matter, it is the parents who must give the information. Sex for the child should be a "family affair"; but if the parents withhold the information, it will soon be an affair of the street or the alley. If the parents take proper care of the problem, the child will be impressed with the need of reticence and reserve that are such wholesome factors for later life. Again, the proper attitude of the parents will encourage the child to report to them whatever crude sex facts and sex knowledge will later come to him from other sources, and in this way the parents will have an opportunity for safeguarding him particularly during the period of the gang age and early adolescence.

But what are the facts? Do parents look after the problem of instruction? Drs. Peck and Wells put the following question to a group of college graduate men: *From what source or sources did you acquire* *your principal sex information?*[1] The following replies were received (the percentages being given): Father (9); Mother (9); Teacher (8); Physician (8.5); Companions (34); Books (25); Others (7). More than one source is frequently mentioned by a single individual; the above percentages are of the number of mentions of the various sources. The data show the influence of companions, books, and physicians, and less influence for the home and school.

Dr. Davis summarizes the data of her findings on the matter as follows:

> As for the source of their sex knowledge, 351 women, about one-third of those who answer definitely, reply that parents or, in a few cases, guardians, gave the earliest recalled information. But twice as many, 725, remember children, servants, and others as their first informants. Asked whether their parents *ever* gave them any sex information, 916 reply in the affirmative. If from these are deducted the 351 who received their first sex information from parents, it is seen that 565 of the parents who eventually gave information had been anticipated by others. One such case writes that she received her earliest information from two girls who described the process of human reproduction in a "thoroughly vulgar way. Curiosity was aroused. I felt utter revulsion and determined never to marry." She adds that her mother gave her "little information, and that unscientific; not anything that I did not already know." The impressiveness of this figure (916) is further impaired when we discover that many received parental information only in their late adolescence or not until mature years, and that a very large number received meager information. Menstruation was the only sex knowledge imparted to 244; the instruction of 130 centered about conduct; "chiefly

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[1] "Further Studies in the Psycho-Sexuality of College Graduate Men," in: *Mental Hygiene*, July, 1925.

> warnings what not to do and how to protect myself from attack," one woman writes. Something about reproduction was told by parents to 394, but only 133 received complete information.[2]

The significance of the replies is brought out further when we learn what the college men as well as the college women replied in answer to the question as to who should impart sex instruction to boys and girls respectively.

The college men replied that the following should, in their opinion, give boys and young men their principal information in sex hygiene: (the percentages of mentions are noted): Father (47); Mother (14); Teacher (9); Physician (25); Religious advisor (3); Others (2.5).[3] The father is named over three times as often as the mother. To explain the low percentage given to the "religious advisor" we must bear in mind that practically all informants seem to have been non-Catholics. Catholic young men would have given a higher percentage to the priest, as we shall see from evidence that will be produced later.

Dr. Davis submitted the following question to 1,200 unmarried college women: *From whom should girls and young women receive instruction with regard to sex matters?* The table on the next page shows the answers given by 1,109 women.[4]

The father is not mentioned by these unmarried women, while several college men mentioned the mother as a desirable instructor in the matter. A Catholic writer, however, believes that there may be situations when a father might venture to impart

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[2] *Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-Two Hundred Women,* New York, 1929, pp. 340-341.

[3] *Mental Hygiene,* July, 1925.

[4] Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 380.

	No.	Percentage
One or both parents		
Parents	193	
Mother	191—384	34.6
One or both parents and others		
Parents, teachers	219	
Parents, physicians	47	
Parents, teachers, physicians	59	
Parents, others	30	
Mother, teachers	116	
Mother, physician	45	
Mother, teacher, physician	35	
Mother, others	42—593	53.4
Others		
Teacher	43	
Physicians	21	
Anyone qualified	45	
Miscellaneous	23—132	11.9

some information to his daughter. He quotes in support of his view the account given him by a woman:

> I was a girl twelve years old, and had begun to realize that there was a mystery about the origin of life, but I was timid by nature and had not made any strong efforts to clear up the mystery. My parents had likewise trained me to be reserved in these things. One day my father called me and explained: "Anna, mother will now need your help about the house more than ever. We have asked God to send us a little baby, and mother is carrying that baby under her heart. She may not work too hard now, and you ought to be very good to her." I was happy and exclaimed: "Oh, a baby to come. Yes, I will be good to mother; you may depend upon me." I kissed daddy and was happier than ever before. I went to find mother and throwing my arms around her, I told her what daddy

> had confided to me. She kissed me, but said nothing. But I was her pal and was allowed even to get ready baby's clothes. I got no further instructions at the time, but felt satisfied.

What Is the Practice of Catholic Parents?

In order to ascertain what is the practice of Catholic parents in the matter, the following questions were included in the questionnaire addressed to 500 pastors: *Is it your impression that Catholic parents give the necessary sex instruction early enough to their children? If not, why not?* Replies were received from 363; of these, 320 replied "No," and 43 replied "Yes." One pastor of a large parish in the East sent along this note:

> You will render a much needed service if you will do something that will make our Catholic parents bestir themselves. Not all parents seem to realize to what frightful dangers their children are exposed at the present time. Children are seduced at so early an age, while they could be saved if they were instructed betimes at home. They contract the habits of impurity before they are aware of what is happening to them. The confessor cannot do everything.

The reasons assigned by the pastors for the parents' neglect of their duty can be grouped under six heads: (1) Parents do not know how to instruct their children; (2) they do not realize the need of the instruction; (3) they are too timid about discussing the subject with their children; (4) they think that the priest should take care of the matter in the confessional; (5) some parents believe that teachers might give sufficient information in a general way in school; (6) too many parents believe that children may be left to themselves in the matter, that somehow or other they will find a way out of the difficulty themselves.

The results of our investigation do not contradict the findings made by Miss Ellamay Horan through the form letter she sent to presidents of sixteen Catholic clubs in Chicago, asking them to inquire at their next meeting how generally mothers were prepared to perform the duty of giving sex instruction to their children. Five hundred ninety-seven mothers were present at the club meetings and only 193 confessed that they "knew how to instruct their daughters in matters pertaining to sex and marriage."[5] One of the presidents added this remark to her report: "Mothers would welcome information or instruction how to correctly approach this subject."

Any priest can verify these facts for himself. Let the priest tell a girl to ask her mother for the proper information and in 95 per cent of such cases he will receive the reply: "I could never talk to my mother about such things." And if asked why not, the answer would most probably be: "My mother would not understand me," or, "I asked her once and she was shocked, gave me a hard look and a curt answer." Indeed, most parents belong in this matter to the "Let me alone" club and are satisfied if they are not asked to furnish the information to their children. Many a parent feels like the mother who confessed: "I had sleepless nights full of fear and anguish and have prayed that my child would never come to me and ask me about these things."[6]

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[5] "Religious Needs of the High-School Girl," in: *Thought,* Dec., 1928, p. 384.

Our questionnaire returns show that fathers as a rule are too shy and timid about the matter, and many boys, too, would resent their fathers' talking about the subject. We believe that, on the whole, mothers are better fitted for the task, and while, of course, it would be desirable that the girls be instructed by the mother and the boys be instructed by the father, the mother may well undertake to instruct both the boys and the girls. One priest writes: "Few parents seem to instruct their boys—when they do it, it is the mother as often as the father who has given the specific instruction. I think that most of the Catholic high school boys have their needs met in the confessional, but that they have to ask for what they need (which is ideal—if they will ask)."

When we come to analyze further the reasons for the parents' inability to give the necessary instruction, we find that they lack both the accurate information and the proper vocabulary. Ninety-eight per cent of them never received the proper information themselves, and hence cannot impart it; and, secondly, the terminology with which they are familiar is either vulgar or even obscene, and they naturally feel embarrassed about using such language in the presence of their children. In the end, they rationalize that, just as they got their information from the gutter, they see no way of preventing their children from getting it from the same foul source.

These facts would seem to make plain the duty that is incumbent upon priests, not only to bring home to parents their obligation of instructing the children in these matters, but also to furnish them with the content and the form of the instruction. Priests will have an opportunity of instructing parents about their duty in the confessional and, in a general way, in sermons. The zealous preacher may find it necessary to insist on this duty "in season and out of season."[7] The veteran missionary Father Elliott, C.S.P., used to instruct his students at the Apostolic Mission House never to preach an entire sermon on the subject of immorality, but, on the other hand, never to preach any sermon without offering a word of warning about this arch-enemy of the soul.

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[6] Cf. Kilian J. Hennrich, O.M.Cap., *Watchful Elders*, Milwaukee, 1929, pp. 21-22.

HOW CAN PARENTS BE INDUCED TO DO THEIR DUTY?

The best opportunity for bringing up the subject is the occasion of a mission or a retreat. Priests may speak more plainly if they have only adults present at the sermons, particularly if they have a segregated group of men, for instance, at the meeting of the Holy Name Society, or of women, when addressing the conference of the Christian Mothers or the Sodality of Married Women.

Some priests have found it helpful to avail themselves of the assistance of a Catholic physician or a graduate nurse to instruct the parents. But in every such case the priest must make certain of the contents of what will be said to his people. The fact that the lecturer is a Catholic is not a sufficient guarantee of the propriety of what he will say. He may be too technical, or he may even have opinions that are at variance with Christian ethics. Physicians and nurses will be apt to stress the pathological aspects of the subject when warning their hearers about the danger of venereal diseases. Though this phase may not be ignored entirely, it should be kept in the background, and chief attention must be given to the positive phases of the training in chastity. The religious and ethical phases may never be neglected, and should always be stressed by the lecturer. In some cases the priest may find it necessary himself to supplement the lecture given by the physician or the nurse.

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[7] 2 Tim. IV, 2.

The priest will be greatly aided in his instruction of parents by Father Kilian J. Hennrich's *Watchful Elders, a Word to Parents and Educators About Educating Children to Purity.*[8] The book is intended as a guide in instructing the little ones. If parents cannot persuade themselves to present its contents in their own way, they should be induced to read it with their children of the proper age. But if they cannot get themselves to do even so little, they may give the book to their children to be read, in the presence of father or mother, before the dawn of puberty.

We believe that a bit of earnest effort on the part of the pastor will produce excellent results. Most Catholic parents are aware of the dreadful dangers to which their children are exposed, and while the propaganda for sex education in the public schools has done much harm, it has also opened the eyes of the general public to the need of positive effort to save our young people. Two thousand three hundred twelve mothers were interviewed in Minnesota, in 1927, on the subject of sex instruction, and only 75 were found

[8] Milwaukee, 1929.

to be opposed to the movement and 34 "indifferent or unconscious of the desirability of the service for their children."[9]

What propaganda has achieved in this matter may be brought out clearly by a comparison of the two studies made by Dr. Exner and Mr. Hughes. About 95 per cent of the 1,029 boys included in the Hughes Survey answered the question as to whether any reliable instruction in sex matters had been received from parents, teachers, or other competent adults. Sixty-eight per cent of the replies were affirmative. A comparison with Dr. Exner's results is significant:

Source of instruction	Percentage in Exner Study	Percentage in Hughes Study
Parents, relatives, or friends	26.0	52.0
Literature (books)	20.1	4.0
School	18.4	15.5
Y. M. C. A.	5.0	14.0
Physician	4.4	9.6

In making the above comparison, it should be noted that the average boy of the group studied by Dr. Exner was four years older than in the group studied by Mr. Hughes, and that they were college men. These differences probably account for the higher percentages in the Exner group reporting instruction from "Literature" and "School." On the other hand, in the Hughes Survey, over twice as many report that they have received instruction from "parents, relatives, or friends," the "Y.M.C.A.," or "physicians," as reported in the Exner Study. This increase probably indicates that, in the interval of eight years between the two studies, more adults have come to give their attention to the sex instruction of young people.[10]

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[9] *Journal of Social Hygiene*, Dec., 1928, pp. 527-528.

Here is an instance of what one zealous pastor accomplished. He has a parish of about 250 families with children. He took up the subject of safeguarding the chastity of the young at the regular meetings of the Holy Name Society and of the Society of Christian Mothers. He found that, of the 500 parents, about 200 mothers and 50 fathers took an active interest in the subject, and about 100 fathers "too busy" to attend the meetings approved heartily after hearing reports from their wives. In this way the pastor reached the majority of the homes in his parish. At the same time the Sisters in the school were instructed to be on the lookout for individual pupils or groups that might need special attention, and if such were found, their parents were informed. The pastor made liberal use of the opportunity of the talks and conferences to make known and distribute the Catholic books on the subject of training in chastity.

Other pastors have found the parent-teacher associations helpful in reaching the homes of children. Some pastors had physicians or nurses address these groups of parents and thus used them as nuclei for creating general interest in giving proper instruction to the children at home. It might be possible for the Catholic parent-teacher associations of a town or even a diocese to co-operate in securing a competent lecturer for addressing the individual groups on the subject.

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[10] Walter L. Hughes, "Sex Experiences of Boyhood," in: *Journal of Social Hygiene*, May, 1926, p. 268.

We cannot approve of some of the things done in the public high schools under the name of social hygiene, but we can learn from the methods of the propagandists of that movement how to gain the interest of our own people for Catholic methods of training in chastity. In 1921, in the National Capital, school officials considered it not only unwise but impossible to make the slightest gesture towards the inclusion of sex instruction in high schools even in such courses as biology and general science. In 1926 a thorough program of sex education following the plan for such instruction as outlined in the Public Health Service publication *High Schools and Sex Education* was being actively carried out in the secondary schools. In February, 1930, a beginning was made to introduce sex instruction into grades 4 to 9 of the elementary schools.[11] This rapid—we should rather say *revolutionary**—advancement was attributed largely to the assistance of civic organizations, especially the parent-teacher associations.

Nothing should be left untried to win the parents to realize their duty in the matter, for it is they who have the primary obligation to take care of their children in this respect. As the young can be taught fully only in private, the parents are the natural instructors. They know their children best, and will understand just how to adapt the instruction to their individual needs. They should be made to recognize that it is easier by far to guide a good child in the ways of goodness than to bring him back once he has stepped aside from the right path. There was a time when some Catholic parents really thought it sinful to bring up this subject with their children, but from our inquiries we are inclined to think that such erroneous views no longer obtain, and that most of our parents are simply too timid about undertaking what will always remain an ordeal.

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[11] *Bulletin of the Social Hygiene Society of the District of Columbia,* 1930, No. 1, p. 3.

* Cf. *supra,* pp. 57 ff.

The pastor, when instructing the parents, should make it plain that they should not be finical about the form or the phrasing. Even though they should not be familiar with the choicest words, their instruction would be given with the proper intention and would proceed from chaste lips, and hence would be immeasurably superior to the instruction that their children might be receiving from vile sources. The crudest teaching of parents is always better than silence, for silence is equivalent to drinking in the infection from the street.

Let the pastor bring home to the fathers and mothers their own plight in this matter when they were children—and they may rest assured that the plight of the children at the present time with the universal corruption is undoubtedly greater. Catholic parents in America are too hesitant about instructing their children in the matter, and the pastor must be prepared to answer all kinds of objections. A frequent objection is that the children are still too young, and that the instruction will be given later. To convince parents that this excuse is a mere defense reaction, the pastor may ask them just when they intend to impart the instruction, and he will discover that the parents are only shirking an unpleasant duty by procrastinating. The priest should therefore bring home to them that procrastinating will delay the duty, and, while increasing the danger of corruption for the children in the interval, will render the task all the more difficult at a later time. The younger the child, the less sex consciousness will there be on his part, and consequently the less embarrassment for both parent and child.

By putting off the sex instruction to a time when it may be too late, the parents may have the same experience as one mother who waited till her boy was fourteen. She began with much hemming and hawing, but had not gotten far in her lesson when her young hopeful waved her aside: ''Oh, that's all stale; I heard all that from the boys three years ago.'' Another mother, who did not hesitate about instructing her children betimes, reports that her little boy, who spent his vacations with an uncle in the country, was unabashed in reporting about the sex life of the animals, and when this same mother instructed her eight-year-old girl about the coming of her baby brother, the girl exclaimed: ''Isn't that nice and sweet.'' If parents are trained properly, they will give the information to their children incidentally and just as the occasion will arise. This is the better way, instead of making much ado over the subject. Let the information be given spontaneously, and on the most common-sense basis.

Giving the Parents the Proper Attitude

Still, we must admit that giving the sex instruction properly will never be an easy matter, and even the propagandists, like Havelock Ellis, concede that it is hard for most parents to break the news to their children.[12] Ellis recalls the instance of a mother who tried to give the proper instruction to her daughters when they reached the age of puberty. She was repelled and they were disgusted. The lesson was a failure, for they neither expected nor desired this instruction. Father Michel may be right in explaining the reason for the failure when he says:[13] "It seems likely that instruction of this kind, based only on hygiene or physiology, must be repulsive. But when the children are taught that the human body is the product of God's hand, that the body is good and sacred in all its organs and parts, and that the body of the good Christian is the temple of the Holy Ghost, much has been done toward removing the aversion against discussing intimately these matters."

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[12] ''The Sex Bogey,'' in: *Forum*, April, 1928, p. 195.

Juvenal tells us: "*Maxima debetur puero reverentia*"—We owe deep reverence to the young—and it is only a defect of a good quality that lets parents plead that the feeling of reverence for the child makes the instruction impossible. In fact, parents refuse to give the necessary instruction, contending that the child would no longer respect them. The objection may indicate a false attitude on the part of the parents towards the whole subject of sex.* It will be necessary then to instruct them plainly, as the Rev. Dr. Paul H. Furfey suggests,[14] that the phenomena connected with sex were established by Almighty God as part of the divine scheme of peopling the world, and that in the New Testament everything connected with procreation has been raised to a supernatural plane by the institution of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

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[13] *Sex Education in the Catholic High School,* Washington, D. C.

* Cf. *infra,* pp. 403-404.

[14] *You and Your Children,* New York, 1929, pp. 112-113.

To say the least, it would be extremely irreverent to represent as vile and shameful a thing to which God has attached sacramental grace. To say that frank discussion of the subject is necessarily wrong would be a blasphemy against the Divine Author of the Bible, in which we find very full discussions of sexual phenomena in the plainest terms.

The parents might also be asked to consider whether the child would respect his parents more if he obtained the information, as he will obtain it sooner or later, from some vile source. And would not worse things follow also because the child would be left to his own vile imaginings, without allowing the parents an opportunity for correcting the impressions? And just because of the secretiveness of his parents, the child would be driven to suspect the worst. Parents will readily understand that, if they do undertake the instruction, there will not be present that unwholesome atmosphere that is liable to prevail if their children get the knowledge under improper circumstances. Also, they will find that the child will be grateful to those to whom he is indebted under God for his life and being. Furthermore, the first lessons given by the parents will give father and mother an opportunity for directing aright the whole process of training the child in chastity.

The pastor will be helped if he can get parents to tell others about the rewards that have come to them for performing their duty in the matter. The mother's or father's sincerity will be rewarded by a great increase of the child's love, esteem, tenderness, and, above all, his open-hearted trustfulness, which is so conducive to the affectionate and intimate companionship between parents and children.

But how different may be the result if the parents refuse to do their duty in this regard! One such mother had the best intentions and protected her children in every possible way. But she could not prevent them from meeting other children who might prove a source of temptation. On the way home from school one of her daughters, eleven years old, was told of the mysteries of procreation in a vile, brutal way that brought out only the feature of sensuality. The girl was shocked, but could not believe the story —it all seemed too horrible to be true. But the other girl merely laughed at her consternation. But to whom should the poor girl go in her perplexity? To her mother? No, that was impossible. But she thought of her sister, one year older than herself, who was preparing at the time for her first Holy Communion. So she told her. The elder girl, too, was shocked, but acted more prudently, for she informed the mother.

What did the mother tell the girl? The younger girl never learned, for the two sisters never discussed the subject again. But her mother, instead of letting the younger girl explain the situation, or of giving her information that would have been suited to her age, misunderstood the whole affair, for she used the harshest language: "You have talked about a subject that children should never discuss. Children commit a mortal sin whenever they talk on such matters, for they spoil other children. . . ."

The girl acknowledged in later years that her heart almost broke when her mother insisted: "I would rather that you had died of the scarlet fever than that you should have done so vile a thing as to talk about this matter." Yet she offered no information and only reproached the girl. And the girl on her part? The child was harassed with anxiety: Well, what *is* the truth of the matter? She could not rid herself of the feeling of guilt and shame. She could not get up courage enough to go to her mother to tell her of the miserable state she was in ever since she had heard the vulgar account. She had lost one priceless boon: she could no longer trust her mother. She kept aloof from her, and developed a complex of melancholy and suspicion that included all her environment. Years later, when she finally discovered the truth, she could explain her mother's conduct: her mother had meant well; she had followed the policy of silence, believing it to be her duty. But this policy of silence and rigid sternness had cast a pall over the life of the girl, and the feeling of mutual distrust prevented the healthy development of the child, and proved a handicap for her entire life.

Yes, parents may not always be aware of the torture caused by their concealing from their children the facts of life, and by driving them to vile sources to remove the mortal terror of the unknown. Dr. Davis reports in her study that only half of the women who received information from parents state whether it was helpful or harmful.[15] Of these, 466 claim that it was helpful, while 23 found it harmful. Two hundred ninety-four say that it only stimulated them to seek information elsewhere. One woman writes: "My mother answered my questions, but did not open the way for other questions which I should have been glad to ask. I could screw up my courage to ask only one question at a time." It is important that parents, in giving information, satisfy their children's curiosity, and encourage them to feel free to come at any time for further knowledge. Catholic parents should have little difficulty in training their children to consult only trustworthy sources for further enlightenment.

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[15] *Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-Two Hundred Women*, New York, 1929, p. 341.

Are All Parents Qualified to Instruct Their Children?

The most serious situation is presented in the case of those parents who would seem to be unfit to impart sex instruction to their children. If parents have entered the married state with improper motives—and their name is legion—how can they be expected to imbue their children with the spirit of chastity? Can parents who look upon marital life as a state of license and lust and indulgence without restraints be fit guides for their children? If father and mother are practicing birth control, can they be expected to advise properly their sons and daughters in the matter of chastity? Nay, it is notorious that mothers are often among the first to instruct their daughters with regard to their marriage duties "to be careful." Still, we do not regard even this situation as at all hopeless. An effort should be made to reform these parents by giving them, first of all, proper instruction about their marital duties. In too many cases they have never been instructed properly, and the efforts made by the priest to fit them for teaching their children may serve as a sorely needed opportunity for their own instruction. Again, we may hope that in the case of young children at least, parents will give the proper information so long as they have been properly instructed themselves with regard to what is their duty in this field.

There remains therefore the difficulty that the really important thing in all parental teaching is not what the parents say but *what the parents are.* The parents may say whatever they please, but they thunder what they are. What they are may speak so loudly that the children cannot hear what they say in favor of self-control. The best parents for training children in chastity are the chaste parents who set the best example. What parents *do* influences children far more than what parents *say.* Children see through their parents much better than their parents can see through the young people. Children are themselves straightforward, and readily see through any posing on the part of their elders. The father who says to his son, "Come," has some influence; the father who says to his son, "Go," has considerably less influence. If parents want children to take a certain course, the best way is to lead them.

It is generally true that the most desirable characters come from the best homes, and the most undesirable from the worst homes. Scientific evidence does not prove that delinquency or immorality or cheating is inherited; it only proves that character traits run in families. Whether the parents transmit their good or bad characters to the children through the germ plasm, or whether they transmit them by precept and example is not clear. Perhaps both are true.[16]

It is these facts that Pope Pius XI had in mind when he wrote in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth:*[17] "That education, as a rule, will be more effective and lasting which is received in a well-ordered and well-disciplined Christian family; and more efficacious in proportion to the clear and constant good example set, first by the parents, and then by the other members of the household.''

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[16] Cf. M. A. May, "What Science Offers on Character Education," in: *Religious Education,* June, 1928.

[17] P. 24.

The priest should use these considerations in order to influence the parents' lives for the sake of the children. We must reform the parents if we would save the children. In a pure home, both precept and example will train the child in chastity. But in an impure home the example may offset or undo the very best instruction given by the parents or others. If the marriage is merely a cloak for immorality, the children will probably peer through the threadbare garment, or look through what may be large rents therein. Parents may fondly imagine that the child is not listening, when in reality he is paying most careful attention to what is not intended for childish ears; or they may think that the child is not seeing, when in reality he is closely observing the actions that are giving the lie to what he has just been told with regard to chastity.

We believe that if our priests will engage vigorously and zealously in the movement for training the young in chastity, they may, by enlisting the cooperation of the parents, do a great deal to restore to the latter the proper evaluation of purity. With the flood of vile literature attacking the very foundation of Catholic morality, many of our Catholic people have lost the Catholic sense of chastity and have taken into their lives the ways of the earth earthly. But with persistent and intelligent efforts made to save our young people, parents will realize the need to inform their minds and hearts with regard to the

Catholic appreciation of chastity and to reform their lives with regard to lax practices, and hence the zeal expended upon the children may serve as a leaven for re-invigorating the whole morality of Catholic living. Here, too, is it therefore true that, if we would educate the young, we must first educate ourselves. If parents would train their children to be chaste, they must first be chaste themselves, or else make themselves chaste.

As to a sublime example for parents in the matter of giving proper training in chastity to their children, we cannot do better than to direct their eyes to St. Anne, the mother of the Virgin Mary. St. Anne taught Mary all a growing girl ought to know with reference to herself and life in general. Let parents when hesitant about instructing their children recall the words of St. Paul: "All things are clean to the clean: but to them that are defiled, and to unbelievers, nothing is clean; but both their mind and their conscience are defiled."[18] Let parents combine with the modest frankness of St. Anne the virtues of that holy mother, and all will be well with the training of their children in chastity: the fruits of their training will, indeed, be children of Mary who is the Mother most pure, and the Mother most chaste.

Who Shall Take the Parents' Place?

In case the parents refuse to fulfill their obligation in the matter, the duty devolves upon priests and teachers to instruct the children individually, according to the measure of their needs and our resources. In his *Encyclical on the Christian Educa-*

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[18] Tit. I, 15.

tion of Youth, Pope Pius XI says[19] that the necessary instruction is to be given by "those who hold from God the commission to teach and who have the grace of state," i.e., priests, parents, and teachers.

The Pastoral of the German Bishops assembled in conference at Fulda in 1913 is explicit with regard to the priest's duty:

> If the need of instruction in sex matters proves necessary for children who have left school, the required information is to be imparted to girls by the mother, to boys by the mother or father; or, in both cases, by the Father Confessor, all of them observing, however, the greatest possible caution. Spiritual directors of young men's sodalities or of educational institutions, etc., may also occasionally exert good influence by discreet teaching and admonition given privately.

In case the children are entrusted to a Catholic boarding school, the authorities of the institution have the same obligations as the parents to provide proper and timely instruction. There may be different ways of discharging this obligation. One method followed by a priest in charge of a large high school and college in the Middle West was to assemble the student body in the chapel and give them several sincere and well-prepared talks based on religion. The students were urged to appeal for individual advice according to their needs. They were free to go to the President, to their confessor, or to any other priest. The system worked out well. The teachers co-operated cheerfully, and many students expressed their appreciation of the help that they admitted was sorely needed.[20]

[19] P. 21.

[20] Matthew A. Michel, O.S.B., *Sex Education in the Catholic High School*, Washington, D. C., 1929, p. 34.

The average boy welcomes help from the priest in this delicate matter. One priest writes: "Every boy who has expressed himself on the matter to me admits that he would prefer receiving this information from a priest rather than from his parents." Another priest says much the same: "Perhaps 25 or 30 per cent of the boys would prefer instruction outside the confessional; the rest prefer the secrecy and anonymity of the confessional. In nearly every case the boys prefer the priest to the doctor as a source of information; few of them have the courage to talk to their fathers on these matters."

Still, there are some boys who have not the courage to consult the priest of their own accord. A boy of seventeen writes: "Priests may be willing enough to help a fellow once he comes to them; but, believe me, some boys fight shy of the priest on this score. And by the time the confessor finds out about the boy's problem, it may be too late, as the sin has been committed or even a bad habit established." This judgment is confirmed by what a Catholic doctor writes:

> It may mean a fierce battle with himself for a boy to go, especially outside of confession, to a priest and make a clean breast of the whole matter and of his difficulties in order to obtain individual and special help. Yet the victory may be of tremendous importance for the lad. For some it may mean a battle of six months or longer. Perhaps all this time the boy is feeling his way with the priest he is thinking of, making small admissions, etc. Often the priest can see what the boy is after, and hence must conduct himself very carefully and strive in every prudent way to inspire confidence. Evening or night will be the best time for the boy to talk out. A well-shaded light will also aid him during the ordeal; perhaps even then there is too much light to hide his embarrassment,

and he will bury his face in his hands while he wrings out his "terrible" story.

WHAT CAN THE PRIEST DO?

What can the priest do in the matter? It was thought best to inquire of priests as to what they would advise. The following question was addressed to 500 priests engaged in parish work: *What should be done in case the priest does not find it feasible to give in the confessional whatever instruction may be deemed necessary for a penitent?* We list in the following the replies received from 349 priests, along with the number of times each suggestion was mentioned:

> Urge penitent to consult parents or a trustworthy physician or nurse (340); advise penitent, if mature enough, to read certain Catholic books on the subject (334); induce penitent to ask questions on doubtful points (215); preach on parents' duties in this regard (185); make plain to the penitent what is a sin in this regard (162).

A priest who for twenty years has been the pastor of a large parish in the East has been using a method of his own which he says has produced the best of results.[21] The pastor believes that the priest may not shirk the duty of sex instruction. As occasion offers, he touches upon the problem of chastity and gives the children, as prudently as he can, indirect sex instruction. He leads up to a certain point, and concludes somewhat in this fashion: "Now, children, there are some things your mother should tell you. Go to her, children, full of confidence, and tell her just what I have told you in these instructions, and tell her that Father . . . has said there are things which she should tell you for your own good. And if she does not tell you, or for some reason or another cannot tell you, then you must feel perfectly free to come back to me, and I will tell you everything, or have some competent person tell you in my place.'' Father Michel remarks that this practice assists in reminding the mother of her duty. The method, we believe, would be still more effective if the pastor would make plain to the parents in advance just what will be expected of them.

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[21] Described in detail by the Rev. Matthew A. Michel, O.S.B., *Sex Education in the Catholic High School,* Washington, D. C., 1929, pp. 31-34.

Shortly before graduation, the pastor calls the boys to the church and gives them a heart-to-heart conference. The same is done with the girls. Then he calls a good Catholic doctor, who has brought up a family and who understands not only professionally, but as an experienced father of young men, the physical and moral problems of training youth. The doctor gives the boys, then the girls, a plain, solid talk which he has previously outlined to the pastor. In these conferences, which are given in church and in the presence of the pastor, the doctor explains thoroughly to the adolescent boys matters of personal hygiene. The instruction for the girls runs along the same lines, stressing cleanliness and giving health hints and warnings.

The young men are given the ideal of pure manhood, and the young women are reminded that it is for them to set the standard. These young people are actually of high school age as the school has a commercial extension. The pastor maintains that it is necessary to give the young people the instruction at this time, for, as he tells them, he may never meet some of them again. He knows from experience that not all the young people join the sodalities, and that many do not attend the parish club meetings.

It goes without saying that such group instructions should not deal with the physical details of sex. We think that the doctor's talks should not be given in church, but in the schoolroom or in the parish hall; also, that it would be preferable if the talk to the girls could be given by a woman physician or by a competent graduate nurse. Most priests would prefer not to be present at the doctor's talk, and very few would think it advisable for them to be present while the doctor is instructing the young women.

The same pastor tries to keep in contact with the young people after they have left his school. He has several sensible elderly or middle-aged women act as chaperons and advisers for the members of the young women's societies. These mentors are worthy of the confidence the young women place in them, and through them the pastor is kept informed about anything that may call for his direction. He admits that, despite his long experience, he often gets surprises as to what these young people, barely out of grade school, hear, see, know, talk about, and do. The pastor finds it much easier to keep in touch with his boys, but would be helped, no doubt, by having a staff of recreation leaders for them likewise.

Another pastor finds it helpful to arrange for a retreat to be given to his boys and girls before they are graduated from the parochial school. One or two conferences are given separately to the boys and the girls, and they are required to read certain chapters in Father Fulgence Meyer's books written for adolescent boys and girls respectively: *Safeguards of Chastity* and *Helps to Purity.*[22]

The priest who is in charge of the class in religion must undoubtedly be specific in dealing with the dangers to chastity. But he should not undertake the physiological explanation of sex matters. If he were to attempt it, he might expose himself to suspicion not only personally but with regard to the clerical state. There is also the further consideration of the need of retaining the reverence of the young. He is in this respect in an entirely different position from the parents, and may legitimately plead to be excused from undertaking this matter.

In the confessional, too, the priest must be extremely cautious in all that he says, as he would be helpless in case he were accused of indiscreet remarks. He may well heed the instruction given by Canon Law (Canon 888, 2) in the matter.[23] Moralists demand reticence on the part of the confessor, even at the sacrifice of completeness of the confession: "*Servanda est regula ab omnibus admissa. In materia luxuriae multo melius est in pluribus deficere, quam in uno superabundare ratione integritatis confessionis.*"[24]

It is true, there is no other place offering such golden opportunities for helping the young as the confessional. There is in the first place the sacramental character, and, besides, the confessional offers the opportunity of imparting detailed information and confidential advice, of supplementing and particularizing and driving home the general information given in sermons and conferences. Someone has said that preachers often offer patent medicines, while the confessor may dispense prescription drugs. Still, the confessional is not the place for primary instruction in sex matters.

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[22] Cincinnati, 1929.

[23] Cf. *supra*, p. xx.

[24] Sabetti-Barrett, *Compendium theologiae moralis*, New York, 1924, p. 778.

First of all, there is no time while so many are waiting to have their confessions heard; and, secondly, it is well known that young people are sensitive about being kept too long in the confessional. The golden rule quoted above from Canon Law and sanctioned by the accumulated experience of generations of prudent confessors is that, after we have made cautious inquiry, and we are convinced there is no sin against chastity, we must be silent. Hence, as a rule, those who plead for the instruction to be given in the confessional can mean no more than this: that the priest will speak only when there is guilt, and when the great asset in fighting impurity, baptismal innocence, has been sacrificed. To quote the author of *Quid vobis videtur?*[25]: "After the thief has come and gone, they would set about putting a lock on the door. They may hug their 'prudence,' while the devil has got the jewel—and, no doubt, he must feel satisfied that he has got the best of the bargain."

While it remains true that the primary instructions should not be given in the confessional, the confessor is bound in conscience to give such instruction as is called for either by the penitent's confession or his questions. A word from the confessor may be sufficient to clear up a doubt, or a direction from him will induce the penitent to consult parents, a trustworthy doctor, or other competent person, or to read a certain book to obtain the necessary information.

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[25] Dublin, 1923. p. 23.

On one point the confessor may feel more free than the priest outside the confessional. There are some who maintain that even though parents are incapable of imparting proper sex instruction, yet doctors, teachers and spiritual guides should undertake it only at the bidding or with the consent of the father or the mother.[26]

This restriction will assuredly not hold with regard to the information that the priest may think necessary in the confessional. Also, in case the child is living in a Catholic boarding school, we may safely presume that the parents have turned over this right to those who are responsible, for the time being, for his education. But in all other cases the priest must certainly make an effort to get the parents to do their duty in the matter, and only upon their refusing to cooperate should he feel free to act in the matter as he will see advisable to protect the child from imminent dangers.

One priest refers to silly mothers who coddle their boys, bringing them up as "sissies." This priest says that some even go so far as to forbid a priest to speak to their pets on the Sixth Commandment. It may be taken as certain that the effeminate boy is much more likely to be impure at heart than the manly boy who works off his superfluous energy at games. And a priest should be firm with these mothers, remembering that, not to them, but to God, does his duty primarily lie. "*Suaviter in modo,*" when possible, but failing that, "*fortiter in re,*" should be his motto, with an iron hand in a kid glove, ruling them as well as their boys, and remembering that, as a teacher of religion, he was ordained to be a master in Israel.[27]

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[26] Cf. Francis Heiermann, S.J., *The Teaching of Sex Hygiene in Our Schools,* Cincinnati, 1914.

However, it will be advisable to proceed in this matter always with the greatest tact and caution, as the slightest impropriety may render the priest liable to misunderstanding, aye, to grave suspicion. Even in the confessional any sex instruction, as far as is necessary, may be imparted only with the greatest care. The priest's age and previous experience will also determine his free or more reserved speech.

Should Teachers Undertake the Work of Instruction?

It is notorious how the home is shifting so many of its duties upon the school, and hence no one is surprised that in the matter of sex instruction the public schools have undertaken also this task. Shall we do likewise and put this burden upon our Catholic schools and teachers?

The children have the right to the knowledge in keeping with their age. They need to be instructed properly and betimes if they are to escape the pitfalls spread out on all sides, and hence we may argue that if the parents refuse to instruct the child, and if there is no opportunity for the priest to assume the duty, the school must shoulder the responsibility. We have stated before that educators in a Catholic boarding school take the place of the parents and hence assume also this duty. Again, there may be cases where the teacher sees imminent danger for a child, and he may have to act quickly to forestall a tragedy.

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[27] *Quid vobis videtur?*, Dublin, 1923, p. 12.

But, as a rule, it would certainly be preferable if the teacher would not have to consider this problem. The relationship between teacher and pupil is generally not intimate enough to allow such familiar matters to be discussed; and, on the other hand, if the relationship is, indeed, familiar enough, there might be serious danger in bringing up so delicate a subject.

Teachers, however, may be obliged to perform the task: in the case of orphans; or if parents are so vile that it would be dangerous to have them instruct their children; or in case there is lacking all mutual trust between parents and children. But in any case efforts must first be made to interest the parents in doing their duty in this respect, and if they refuse or are unable to perform the duty, they will probably welcome the co-operation of the teacher. With the permission of the parents the teacher may then proceed in the matter.

Certain teachers, however, should never venture to perform the task: those who cannot get themselves to believe it is their duty; also those who would be embarrassed or are self-conscious in the matter; abnormal or pessimistic teachers; teachers not respected by their pupils.[28]

It may happen that the best efforts made in this direction will fail in an individual case and that it may not be possible to secure parents or another suitable person to instruct the child. If the right person cannot be found, the idea of sex instruction may have to be abandoned for the time being. The instruction may be desirable in the case, yet may prove to be impracticable under the circumstances. It would certainly be the height of folly to commit the task to a person who is a fanatic on the subject of sex instruction. Also, it would prove tragic to allow the child to fall into the hands of such persons as cannot discuss sexual topics without becoming sexually excited Such perverts may be eager to seize every opportunity of speaking to children upon sexual matters, intoxicating themselves the while with their sexual imaginings.[29]

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[28] Cf. M. A. Bigelow, *Sex Education,* New York, 1924, pp. 115-120.

In this matter the teacher must use his personality rather than his tongue, and no teacher should undertake this difficult task if he does not command the respect of his pupils. While boys should, as a rule, be instructed only by men, and girls only by women, it must be admitted that women, on the whole, are better fitted than men to impart this instruction for the reason that they are more natural and unaffected in dealing with the child. If it is true that the child in the elementary school requires mothering on the part of the teacher, we must admit that women teachers will, on the whole, be better fitted for the task. German Catholic writers do not hesitate to suggest that a nun, with her motherly heart and if properly trained herself, would be well fitted for the task.[30] These writers argue that new needs call for new efforts and believe that proper instruction given to our nuns in the novitiates and normal schools would not only fit them for the task but would assist them in their personal lives. The writers plead with the Sisters to consider the present-day situation that has broken up so many homes and that lets thousands of mothers neglect altogether the education of their children. Considerations like these will have weight with our consecrated women, though we do not doubt what an effort it will cost them to make the attempt of giving such intimate instruction to a pupil.

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[29] Cf. Albert Moll, *The Sexual Life of the Child*, London, 1923, pp. 301-302.

[30] Cf. Wilhelm, *Das sexuelle Leben und seine Bewertung in der Erziehung der Kinder*, Donauwoerth, 1906, p. 25.

It is a hopeful sign to have Sister Mary Agnesine, S.S.N.D., admit that "no one is better fitted for the work [of providing special aid and guidance] than the teacher."[31] She rightly calls upon her sisters in the profession not to shirk their duty in this regard. Sister Mary Agnesine has found the question box helpful in discussing the Sixth and Ninth Commandments, as the children may prefer not to ask the questions openly. The question box has the further advantage of giving the teacher an opportunity of looking ahead and preparing herself more carefully. For the encouragement of those who hesitate in touching upon such delicate matters, Sister Mary Agnesine reports that she has never in a single instance come across any levity or irreverence in connection with this work; on the contrary, "pupils have always shown themselves most grateful for the help they received." The same writer mentions that young people have often stated that if they had received proper instruction at the right time and in the right place, they would have been spared much worry and uneasiness.

However, our teachers must bear in mind that it is one thing to answer a question simply by saying,

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[31] "The Sixth and Ninth Commandments," in: *Catholic School Journal*, May, 1930.

"No, that may never be done," yet that it is quite another thing to develop the right attitude towards certain laws and regulations by showing their reasonableness. Sister Mary Agnesine suggests that it is part of the work of discussion groups to develop such attitudes. She offers interesting problems for discussion, and reports that while discussing one of the problems—that of pictures in one's private room—a group of girls worked out a plan for furnishing an "ideal" room for a young girl. Out of this plan has developed the study of worth-while art pictures, their place in the home, their history, the artist, etc. Other problems would, no doubt, suggest similar projects. In this connection, the boys might take up a study of Tennyson's *Sir Galahad*, while Alice Meynell's *The Shepherdess* would appeal to the girls. A Mary Book with pictures and poems referring to Mary's purity could be made in the upper grades of the elementary school.

We believe that the school at best can do but little in the matter. It should attempt as a rule only to supplement the instruction given by the parents at home where the necessary information should be given to children in a prudent, cautious, and religious manner. The child should be taught in school that his body is a holy thing, a temple of the Holy Ghost. Detailed knowledge of sex matters should never be imparted to a group of young people. The detailed knowledge must be given to the child individually, according to his personal needs. In a group the child will not ask questions. The presence of the other children is also a stimulus to levity, and the knowledge is thus vulgarized.

Indirectly the school can do more by discussing publicly what the young people may be expected to know. This frankness in the school would compel the parents to be frank with their children at home. The parents can hardly ignore the questions of the child prompted by what he has heard from the teacher in school. Hence the school would again serve the purpose of reminding the parents of their duty.

The teacher will do well to observe the following rules in giving any kind of instruction that deals with the subject of chastity:

1. What he says in class should be clear and sufficiently informing, yet he should reserve detailed information to be given by the priest in the confessional or by himself privately to the pupil. In general he must be guided by his own common sense as to when he is to speak, and how much he is to say. Class instruction should be only of a general kind, but, at the same time, it should be sufficiently enlightening.

2. The instruction should be adapted to the age and other circumstances of the pupils.

3. The discourses should be prepared beforehand, even to the words, and the teacher should speak without doubt or hesitancy or anything suggesting embarrassment.

4. No sex books should ever be given to children. They stress the knowledge element as though that were the only factor to be considered. Even Catholic books that deal with the intimate facts of personal life should not be read by the children as a rule, but, in case of need, parents or teachers should give their contents to children, or read from them to the young folks. At the most these books should be read by the

children in the presence of the teacher, and their questions answered by the latter privately.[32]

Let us not expect too much from the work of the school. Certain German writers at one time expected the school to do almost everything in the matter. But all recent German literature stresses the essential need of what the parents must do. Dr. Rudolph Allers, for instance, insists that the sexual enlightenment is the duty of the parents, and of others only if the parents refuse to perform the task. He is altogether opposed to group instruction in the subject, and contends that in the classroom no more is permissible than to teach the general facts of biology and then to answer whatever questions may be put by the children.[33]

In our own country the writers who are familiar with the actual situation are conservative in what they expect the school to accomplish in the matter. Dr. Howard B. Woolston reports that the lectures that have been given by physicians and nurses to parents represent the kind of teaching that "is apparently better than direct approach to the children in classes. The result of parental counsel is unquestionably better than that of the grade teacher."[34]

PROVIDING FOR THOSE NOT IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

While dealing with the teacher's rôle in training our young people in chastity, our heart must naturally go out to the many who never come under the influence of our Catholic schools. Over half of our

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[32] Cf. *Quid vobis videtur?*, Dublin, 1923, pp. 24-27.

[33] *Das Werden der sittlichen Person*, Freiburg, 1929, p. 252.

[34] *Prostitution in the United States*, New York, 1921, p. 296.

Catholic children, i.e., over two millions, are not in Catholic schools, and of our Catholic children of high school age who numbered in 1928, 1,337,500, only 226,466 are in Catholic schools. What can be done for the 442,284 who are in the public high schools and for the 678,750 who are not in any secondary schools? In the first place, when we remember that it is the high school age that brings with it the strongest of sex temptations, we must be all the more eager to prepare our young people for these volcanic adolescent years. Only ideals and attitudes formed before this period can effectively satisfy the youth and guide him during these dangerous years. Hence all the more need for using to the utmost the opportunities offered while we have the children with us in our Catholic elementary schools.

But there remains the serious problem of the two million Catholic children who do not attend any Catholic school.[35] It is in their behalf that the priest will have to exert himself especially, through the home, the Sunday school, parish clubs, and parish societies. It will be for our parish priests to coordinate all these agencies in a way that will render them helpful in the large task of keeping our young people chaste. The home remains the important agency. If we underestimate its importance we shall justify the complaint made by Father August Bomholt:

> There is too much "passing of the buck." The parents look to the teacher, the teacher to the priest, and finally all turn in desperation to the "Y," the club, the "Big Brother," the scoutmaster, the boyology expert, the

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[35] Cf. W. A. Scullen, "The Catholic Child in the Public School," in: *Ecclesiastical Review*, June, 1930

> juvenile judge—to anybody and everybody for relief. The problem originated in the home and it is *there* that the remedy must be found and applied. And unless we secure the effective and continuous co-operation of the parents, so many of whom have shown themselves to be indifferent and even criminally negligent, Church and school, and, *a fortiori*, any other agency, cannot succeed. Some twenty years of study and experience have made this plain to me, no matter what anyone may say to the contrary.[36]

Yet, even were it possible to get the Catholic home to do its full duty—a vain hope in these latter days—much would remain to be done by those who are in charge of the recreation activities of our young people. The training for boy leaders is taking cognizance of this need.[37] The Knights of Columbus have opened training schools for boy leaders at the Catholic Summer School, Cliff Haven, N. Y.; at the University of Notre Dame; at Lake Simcoe, in Canada; in Austin, Texas; in Santa Fe, New Mexico; and in Los Angeles, California.[38]

However, in suggesting that others than teachers might in case of need instruct the young privately, we are thinking only of such as are mature in years and mind. Professor Foerster, who is generally so conservative when writing on the subject of sex instruction, offers a strange suggestion in this regard:

> Should there be special circumstances which make a teacher feel that he or she is particularly called upon to give some instruction in sex matters (say, in order to counteract impure elements in the life of the school),

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[36] *Fortnightly Review* (St. Louis), Nov. 1, 1927, p. 436.

[37] Cf. Fr. Kilian J. Hennrich, O.M.Cap., *The Boy Leader's Primer*, Milwaukee, 1930.

[38] *Columbia*, Nov., 1929, pp. 36-37; cf. *infra*, pp. 328 ff.

> then the best thing to do would be to speak to two or three boys or girls privately. Some simple explanation should then be given in connection with a moral and religious view of life as a whole. It can then be left to chosen pupils of the highest character to influence and enlighten the others in a friendly way, thus helping to create a wholesome corporate spirit in the school.[39]

It would seem to be presumptuous to assume that children of the same age as their companions could be depended upon to instruct the rest in a proper way, to answer their questions, and give them the proper viewpoint. The secretiveness, too, of the teacher in selecting just a few to give a message that he is afraid to deliver himself would not impress the class favorably. The teacher at best can only assist the parents in their work, and how could he presume to entrust this delicate task to two or three confidants as immature as the rest? Even the teacher cannot presume that he will have for each of his pupils the individualized feeling of intimacy that is based on affectionate and kindly interest and which is so necessary to create in the child the consciousness of being bound up with his parents.[40]

Physicians have likewise been recommended for the work. They are undoubtedly familiar with the subject matter and the terminology. However, the priest or the parents should make certain, before entrusting the charge of enlightenment to them, that their instruction will not be naturalistic, but in keeping with Christian ethics. The fact that a physician is a Catholic is not a sufficient guarantee of his proper attitude towards the problem of chastity. Furthermore, there is always danger that the physician, because of his professional familiarity with sex matters, may lack tact and delicacy in dealing with the subject. Trained nurses may be employed to instruct girls in case of need, though in their case, too, it will be necessary to make certain that they measure up to what is required of a person in giving this instruction.

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[39] *Marriage and the Sex Problem*, New York, 1913, p. 189.

[40] Cf. Otto Tumlirz, *Die Reifejahre*, Part II, Leipzig, 1924, pp. 41-42.

Our conclusions on the subject agree with what the Rev. Dr. J. Elliot Ross concludes from Père Gillet's study of the problem of proper enlightenment:

> If, then, knowledge is ordinarily bound to come, it is best that it should come from those interested in the spiritual welfare of the child. Père Gillet, therefore, advocates a common-sense explanation, by parents or teachers, or confessors, that will be adapted to the individual child. This explanation should not go into scientific details, as if each child were a student of gynecology; it should not be collective; it should not be the same for all, nor always given at the same age. Because what is told, and how it is told, must vary from child to child.[41]

But, after all is said and done, we must confess again that nobody can really take the place of the parents in instructing their children on the subject. No other person, neither priest nor teacher, no physician or nurse, no boy leader or club manager, can bring home to the child the consciousness of that bond which unites him with his parents—a bond that has been consecrated by devoted love, by pain and anguish, by sacrifices and privations of all kinds. To bring home to the child the realization of that bond, there is needed the word of mother or father. Hence, we must induce and train parents to impart to their children the necessary information betimes.

[41] *Innocence and Ignorance,* New York, 1917, p. xiv

CHAPTER VIII

WHAT MUST BE TOLD?

The first point we wish to make here is that the amount of sex information to be given to the young should be small. Much of the information offered in sex books is superfluous and often even harmful, and for anyone familiar with these books it would be necessary to unlearn much of what he has learned from that source. A good working principle is to give children as little sex instruction as we must and as much training in chastity as we can.

The substance of what may be told to the young people may be summarized as being included in the following: enlightenment on the physical distinction between the sexes, the origin of life, the purpose of marriage, and a warning against the physical and moral disasters which follow in the wake of immorality. We do not expect unanimity with regard to what should be told the young people. Even among the propagandists of sex instruction there is much disagreement with regard to the essentials as well as the accidentals of the subject.

Consequently we are not surprised that our inquiries among priests and parents show likewise a great diversity of opinion. There is no unanimity of opinion with regard to how we shall bring home the lesson of modesty. Some think that the Bible story of Noe and his sons would be the best approach, while others believe that boys would laugh at the scene.

Again, there is diversity of opinion with regard to how the Bible accounts of the temptation of Joseph or of Susanna should be used to teach the practice of fighting off temptations by the thought of God's Holy Presence. While all are practically agreed as to the need of sex instruction, the results of our inquiries demonstrate that in the performance of the duty, *praxis est multiplex*—diverse practices obtain. And that is as it ought to be. No two cases will ever be identical. Hence the limitations of group instruction.

Yet, no matter what the approach for teaching the lesson of modesty, there can be but one opinion that the child must be guarded, on the one hand, against such prudery as sees evil where there is none, and, on the other, against such shamelessness with regard to his body as may become a danger. Dr. James J. Walsh insists on the duty of teaching even the youngest child the need of such cleanliness as will "prevent the accumulation of certain salts that are deposited from the urine, so that at the removal of the irritation the child's attention may not be called to the sex feelings thus excited." In his *Psychotherapy*[1] Dr. Walsh illustrates by specific cases how important a factor cleanliness of the sex organs may be for preventing bad habits. In these cases cleanliness is truly next to godliness.

Our Catholic people should be wary of sex books and moving pictures that pretend to enlighten the public on the dangers of immorality. This is a subject that has been much commercialized, and greed for profit has at times put forward material under the pretext of informing but with the real purpose of appealing to the lower nature of man. Our Catholic people will do well to consult pastors before purchasing any sex books or attending moving picture shows "for men only" or "for women only."

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[1] New York, 1923, p. 485.

A point clearly established by our inquiries is that neither parents nor priests believe that concentrated sex instruction given at any one time is adequate. All seem to realize that training in chastity should be a combination of spiritual training, character education and health instruction; and therefore the subject cannot possibly be condensed into one or two lessons. There must be progressive moral guidance and hygienic instruction. Here again it is plain that without the home there can hardly be adequate training in chastity.

A further result of our inquiry is that no one expects good results from the bald statement of pathological or physiological facts. This point of view is brought out by Dr. Edward L. Keyes in his essay on *Morals and Venereal Disease.* This author, an outstanding medical authority, speaks of the pathologic emphasis which does not lift the subject out of the prevailing atmosphere of vulgarity. The physiologic emphasis, while seeking to interpet sex life in its relation to developing manhood, emphasizes too exclusively the physical aspects of the question. He reports that Dr. Exner found students hungry for the idealistic emphasis, which goes to prove again that at bottom our young people are idealists, all superficial appearances to the contrary notwithstanding.* It is encouraging to have this eminent authority conclude: "Set the proven chastity of the Catholic priesthood against the materialism of socialist and Nietzschean philosophy and we may fairly conclude that there are no known limits to the control of sexual passion. With sufficient moral incentive any passion may be controlled.''[2]

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* Cf. *infra*, pp. 419 ff.

One of our correspondents distinguishes two fields of sex instruction: one dealing with the origin of man and sexual life in general, and the other dealing with the evil results of impurity for physical life. The correspondent suggests wisely that little attention be given to the second phase of sex until the boy or girl is fifteen or sixteen.

THE BIOLOGICAL APPROACH?

The approach most commonly recommended in books on sex education is the biological. But the Rev. Dr. John M. Cooper rightly disapproves of the circuitous route of beginning with the amoeba and running up through flowers, insects, fishes, frogs, birds, and mammals to man. He thinks that flowers, birds, and pets offer a better medium of instruction. Flowers appeal to the aesthetic sense of the child; and in birds, the sensuous element is less obvious, while paternal and maternal care, love, and sacrifice are to the fore. The coming of puppies or kittens or chicks is a domestic event that associates the reproductive process with the affection and love of a child for his pets. Dr. Cooper is of the opinion that ordinarily the knowledge acquired from these sources, with or without parental coaching or hints, will suffice for pre-adolescent years.[3] But priests generally believe that fuller instruction will be required if our children are not to be contaminated by foul instruction.

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[2] *Social Hygiene*, Jan., 1916, p. 50.

[3] *Sex Education in the Home*, Washington, D. C., 1921, pp. 9-10.

Father Vermeersch, S.J., advises that the first illustrations be taken from plant life, rather than from animals. Father Kilian J. Hennrich, O.M.Cap., adopts this approach in his booklet *Watchful Elders.* The author of *Quid vobis videtur?* uses the same approach, but introduces some incidents from the life of the Blessed Virgin and the birth of Christ. Father Fulgence Meyer, O.F.M., treats conception, gestation, and birth by paralleling them with incidents in the life of the Blessed Mother. A similar approach is suggested by the authors of *Educating to Purity.*

A word of caution with regard to whatever approach is adopted. In speaking of animals, it will be necessary to bring out the points of difference rather than the points of likeness. The reason is obvious: we do not wish the young to associate mere animal functions with the bodies which are the temples of the Holy Ghost, or with so sacred a subject as the Sacrament of Matrimony. In speaking of plant life, it will be necessary to take pains to make the subject clear enough. Otherwise there may be wrong notions for many years. One woman was scrupulous for years in handling things touched by men; she had never gotten beyond the illustration of the pollen. Finally, in using the beautiful analogy from the life of the Blessed Virgin, it will be necessary to give real facts instead of mere preachment.

Dr. Otto Pasteau, in his Report to the French Association of Christian Marriage, advises that parents must not prolong conversation on the subject, and that the one all-important consideration is to be perfectly simple and straightforward and to tell the truth. The truth must not come all at once, but little by little without rhetoric or poetry to complicate the situation. The main idea is to have the child understand that his body was formed in the body of his mother, that from the moment of his coming into existence, for many months his mother provided shelter and food for him, and then suffered a great deal in bringing him into the world, so that he can never have enough of affection and gratitude for her. Dr. James J. Walsh agrees that it is better not to go into details beyond that.[4]

It should be the rule in all sex instruction to avoid physical details as far as possible. Physical details are apt to fix themselves in the vivid imagination of the child for years after, and may cause serious difficulties with regard to thought control. This rule, however, should not prevent us from answering frankly the child's questions.

A mother informs us that she found the following from *Good Housekeeping*,[5] quite helpful:

> Mother and father love each other very much. Where God is, there is love, and God wants little ones to be. Children are the special proof that God is love. When God wants to send a little child into a home, he fits up, just beneath the mother's heart, a snug nest, not unlike the nests the birds live in. Then out of two tiny eggs the father and mother bring together in the nest, a little child is hatched just like a little bird. But for months and months he lives in his nest in the mother's body. The mother knows the little one is there and loves him dearly. A part of all the food she eats goes to his nourishment. At last when the little one is too big to stay longer in

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[4] "Sex Instruction," in: *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, Feb., 1930.

[5] Sept., 1911.

the nest, the doctor comes and helps to bring him out into the world.

Answering the Child's Questions

Our inquiries among parents and priests have produced no convincing reason why parents should refuse to answer even the youngest child when he asks: "Where do babies come from?" An attempt on the part of the parents to ignore the question may silence the child and drive him elsewhere for information or let him suspect that there is a mystery that the parents do not wish to discuss.

Father Vermeersch suggests that if the question of the child be merely superficial, it may be ignored; but if the question be put seriously or be repeated, it should be answered seriously. Father Hennrich takes the same view in *Watchful Elders*. However, how can the parents tell whether the question is a passing whim or is prompted by serious intent? What harm could come from frankly answering the question by saying: "Baby comes from God. And God sent with him an angel, who will stay with baby, day and night, and watch over him to keep away danger." If the child persists and wishes further information, further information should be given frankly. Worse than ignoring the question would be the practice of telling the child: "Children must not talk about such things." Such an answer would only stimulate his curiosity and drive him to draw the secret from forbidden sources.[6]

Our investigation reveals that the majority of parents still seem to believe in the magic of the stork story. Eighty per cent of those who were interrogated recently by a social worker still believe that the story of the stork should be told to them in answer to their first questions, or even before they ask any questions. One mother explained that the very mysteriousness of the stork story is a help to creating reverence for the origin of life. Another mother could not understand why educators who insist that fairy tales be told to children will not tolerate this particular one. A third mother thought that the stork story is just as harmless as that of the sleep-producing sand man. A fourth mother believed that when the child grows up, he will realize that the deception was practiced for the sole purpose of stopping an inquisitiveness that might not well be indulged. Gerrard, Bopp, Melody, and Moll are the only writers we can quote in favor of the practice; all other writers whom we consulted are opposed to the telling of the stork story.

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[6] Cf. *Wegweiser der Jugendrettung*, edited by the Verein der katholischen Lehrerinnen, Freiburg, 1905, p. 84.

We believe that the child should be told the truth from the very beginning. There can be no blessing upon a lie. The end does not justify the means. There is no need of a fairy tale in this case. The account that the child grows in a nest beneath the heart of the mother and is then born amid pain is so precious a story that no fairy tale could be half so beautiful.

The evidence that we have examined proves that the stork story has done a great deal of harm in that it represents one of the bad features of the hush-hush policy that has been prevailing with regard to the mystery of procreation. We think that the stork story should be condemned on several points. It allows the mother to dispose with a joke of what may be a serious question on the part of the child, and offers the parents a ready opportunity for shirking the duty of properly informing their children. The stork story may also create the impression that in sexual matters the child must turn to others, as the parents will not tell him the truth, and it may render it impossible for the parents to give the child at a later date the information that will satisfy him. The child who has been giving credence to the story for some years will be shocked when he learns the truth, and will be impelled to investigate for himself so mysterious and fascinating a subject. The vile form in which the real facts may later be presented to the child by bad companions may harm the parents in the child's eyes, and the story of the stork will confirm this unfavorable impression, as the boy or girl may suspect that the consciousness of guilt prevented the parents from telling the truth.[7]

IS THERE NEED OF MODEL LESSONS?

We have insisted all along that the sex instruction should be individualized. And individualizing the instruction is surely necessary with regard to *what* shall be said. There are, as the Rev. Dr. J. Elliot Ross remarks, no typical cases. Each one is individual, and we must leave to the good sense of the parent, or other person charged with the education of the child, the duty of adapting to his individual needs the necessary information.

We are here presenting a list of books and pamphlets that parents, priests, and teachers will find helpful in getting the material for instructing the young:

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[7] Cf. Hans Hoppeler, *Ratschläge für Eltern*, Leipzig, 1921, p. 24.

Watchful Elders by the Rev. Kilian J. Hennrich, O.M.Cap. (1929), is especially helpful for instructing parents how to give the proper information to young children. The booklet contains further material that may be used in early and late adolescence, and deals also with particularly difficult cases.

Safeguards of Chastity by the Rev. Fulgence Meyer, O.F.M. (1929), offers frank yet reverent instruction on chastity for adolescent boys. The author suggests that fathers read and explain to their adolescent boys those portions of the book that pertain to their age and condition. *Helps to Purity* by the same author (1929), is a companion volume for adolescent girls.

The Pure of Heart by the Rev. Daniel A. Lord, S.J. (1928), is an informative booklet written in story form for adolescent boys and girls.

Youth's Pathfinder by the Rev. Fulgence Meyer, O.F.M. (1927), is a book written for young men and young women, and contains several chapters that deal with the problems of chastity.

Plain Talks on Marriage by the Rev. Fulgence Meyer, O.F.M. (1927), is well written for those who are married, or who are about to be married.

Religion Outlines for Colleges, Vols. I and IV, by the Rev. John M. Cooper, S.T.D. (1924-1928), contain several chapters that deal with problems of chastity and marriage.

Quid vobis videtur? is a book written by "an Irish Priest" for priests on educating boys to purity (1923). The author deals with the subject in a convincing way and offers models of instruction for boys and young men.

Educating to Purity by Fathers Michael Gatterer, S.J., and Francis Krus, S.J., translated by the Rev. C. Van Der Donckt (6th ed., 1927) contains models of sex instruction for young people of various age periods.

The Difficult Commandment by the Rev. C. C. Martindale, S.J. (1927), deals with the subject of self-control in a way that will appeal especially to young men.

Boyland Bridge by the Rev. Frederick Macdonnell, S.J. (1927), is a book on purity for boys written in an entertaining way.

Birth Control by the Rev. John M. Cooper, S.T.D. (1923), is an excellent manual for married men and women.

Sex Education in the Home by the Rev. John M. Cooper, S.T.D. (1921), offers instruction to parents about providing proper information and character training for their children.

Innocence and Ignorance by Père M. S. Gillet. O.P., translated, with a foreword, by the Rev. J. Elliot Ross, Ph.D. (1917), offers proof of the need of proper instruction and gives valuable directions for imparting information to the young in a proper way.

Family Limitation by the Rev. John A. Ryan, S.T.D. (n.d.), is a pamphlet for married people.

Birth Control and Eugenics by the Rev. Charles Bruehl, S.T.D. (1928), is a book for parents.

Marriage and the Sex Problem by Frederick W. Foerster, Ph.D., translated by Meyrick Booth, B.Sc., Ph.D. (1912), is a book for parents and those about to marry.

Marriage and Parenthood by the Rev. T. J. Gerrard (1911), is a book for parents and those about to marry.

Priests, parents, and teachers should draw upon this literature for whatever instruction they will deem necessary. A priest who has been blessed with unusually good results in dealing with adolescent boys has furnished the following talk which he employs for the private instruction of boys ranging from fourteen to sixteen years. We prefix his own explanation of his course of procedure.

Instructing the Adolescent

There is no question of ever giving sex information without at the same time stressing the incentives to chastity. What should be stressed is the sublime plan of God in all that pertains to reproduction, the reasonableness of God's law, also that there can be no question of considering legitimate sex indulgence as degrading, or of calling God a tyrant for declaring certain parts of the body to be "bad" when, in fact, no parts of the human body are "bad." The young people must be made to understand that the knowledge of the mysteries of sex is not wrong, but only the abuse of the knowledge is evil. They should be told of the answer of the Immaculate Mother of God to the Angel: "How shall this be since I know not man?" Mary was instructed in these matters, and the knowledge cast no shadow upon her immaculate virtue. Reference may also be made to the words of the Hail Mary: "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb."

The boy should be told that when the angels fell. God might have immediately created innumerable beings to fill their places in Heaven. He chose rather to associate man in that wonderful work; He would, as it were, confer His divine creative power upon fathers and mothers. Just as He governs the entire world through Love, so these new inhabitants of Heaven would be the result of the love of father and mother, of husband and wife.

The boy has, as a rule, heard disgusting remarks about the act whereby a new being is conceived, that it is disgraceful, and so forth. But the act is, on the contrary, truly sublime. God Himself co-operates most intimately, the parents creating the body while He immediately creates the soul. How could we have the saints or even the Blessed Virgin without this act? The act, however, is allowed only in the married state. Why?

The restriction is not due to what some call God's tyranny. Right order demands the restriction: first. if sexual intercourse were permitted outside the married state, there would be no home for educating the child; perhaps the father would not even be known. Secondly, if solitary indulgence were permitted, the ruin of the human race might follow. since no one would care to assume the burdens of a family while he could enjoy the pleasures of the flesh without incurring any further obligation. Anyone who knows of the heavy burdens of family life, the dangers of motherhood, the difficulties involved in rearing children, and so forth, will understand that God must offer a strong incentive for perpetuating the human race. This incentive is the sex instinct. This instinct is not strong before puberty. The boy should be told the reason for the awakening of the sex instinct at puberty, and should be told plainly about the signs of puberty.

This explanation offers the foundation for presenting the moral obligations involved in the Sixth Commandment: (1) man is not permitted to seek the gratification of his sex instinct contrary to the purpose of God; (2) the other prohibitions can be traced to the danger of frustrating the purpose of God. . . .

While I try to adapt my instruction to the needs of each individual case, I follow, on the whole, the above line of thought and instruct the boy as follows:

> The knowledge of sex matters is not wrong; only the abuse of such knowledge is bad. When the Angel appeared to the Immaculate Virgin Mary and told her she should become the Mother of God, she showed clearly from her answer, "I do not know man,"—i.e., I have not done what is necessary to become a mother—that she knew clearly of these sex matters. And she was probably very young at the time. We know that this knowledge did not cast the least shadow on her incomparable, spotless chastity.
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> You have, no doubt, picked up here and there bits of knowledge as to how we come into existence, and the like subjects. You have perhaps learned of these things from what I might call "gutter-gossip." Naturally, but unfortunately, a boy will thus get a lopsided notion of all these matters and will conclude that it is all merely a matter of sensual pleasure, and very degrading pleasure at that. This notion is far from the truth.
>
> God has a most beautiful plan in all these matters. When the angels fell, God could have filled their places in Heaven by creating new beings through a mere act of His will. But He chose otherwise. He wished to associate

with Himself, in this sublime work, the activity of human beings. For this purpose He gave His most divine power—the power of creation—to human beings. Consequently, our parents really create our bodies, while God creates our souls. Just as God governs the whole world through Love, so He ordained that these new beings, destined for Heaven, should be the result of the love of father and mother, of husband and wife.

The act whereby a new being is brought into existence is called the act of generation. We speak of it also as being sexual intercourse, or the use of the marriage rights. Contrary to what boys usually hear about these things, this act is sublime and sacred. If it were not for this act of generation, we should not be in existence, the saints would not be in existence, not even the Blessed Virgin. The only exception is our Divine Savior. In His case, it was not becoming that, having a Heavenly Father from eternity, He should have also an earthly father. The act performed by husband and wife is an act of creation, hence an act that involves sublime power. Even God is drawn most intimately into the act: He creates the immortal soul at the very moment that the parents create the body. God's direct co-operation makes the act most wonderful and truly marvelous.

When we consider the agony and danger of the mother in giving birth to a child, the hardships of caring for babies, the burden of the father in supporting a family—we realize that if God should not offer strong incentives towards having children, no one would bother with them, and hence the human race would die out, and no new souls would be born to praise God eternally in Heaven. Accordingly, God has associated with the act of generation a strong urge, drive, or instinct. If God did not give us the instinct, or the appetite, to eat and drink, we should forget to do so, and hence should starve to death; in a similar way, God has implanted in the human body the "appetite" for the act of generation, for the purpose of preventing the human race from dying out. This appetite we call the sex instinct.

The sex instinct is good in itself. God has given it for a purpose. But it must be used according to God's plan. Hence it is in a way wrong to speak of it as being "bad" pleasure; or of certain parts of our body as being "forbidden." No part of our body is "forbidden" or "bad"; God made every organ of the body. I should rather say that certain parts of our body are too sacred to be trifled with, to be abused, or to be talked about lightly.

There is no tyranny on God's part, though a boy may often be tempted to think so. God does not give us the sex instinct, and then turn about and forbid us to use it. Yet He must, as the Author of all order, forbid certain things. As long as the pleasure connected with the sex instinct is used in the married state in accordance with God's plan, there is nothing wrong in it. Nothing may ever be done to frustrate God's purpose; nothing to prevent the coming into existence of God's wonderful children; nothing may be done to rob God of His sacred rights.

Order demands that God must forbid certain other actions. If men and women were allowed freely to indulge in this act outside the marriage state, children would be born, and we should not know who was their father; children would be born, and there would be no home secured by the state of marriage to care for the little ones. Such a situation would be the ruin of the race. God must provide for the well-being of the unborn child. Again, if men were allowed to indulge in this pleasure, man with man, then why bother about getting married, and assume the burden of having children? Finally, if man were permitted to seek this pleasure with his own body, why be worried with having children? You see, man would turn this well-nigh divine power to his own selfish ends, and God's beautiful plan would be destroyed!

Therefore it is all so reasonable, so logical, simply in accord with the dictates of right order.

There is another phase of this plan of God that I must mention. You see, when you were a child, you could not have taken care of, or provided for, any children of your own. Hence it was impossible for you to become a father. Later, however, at about fourteen or so, you begin to develop new powers. And this is the time of many changes for the boy—and a critical time as well. He becomes restless, is frequently subject to low spirits; finds it harder to behave—in a word, is rather revolutionary all around. Also, the sexual organs begin to develop and become more sensitive; temptations against purity are stronger; and the boy begins to feel more of an attraction for the opposite sex. Now all this proves nothing more than that the boy is, after all, a human being—and there is nothing so surprising in that. It is God Who has thus arranged these things: it is ordinarily the time when the young man begins to look about for a companion whom he might later marry in order to establish his own little home. All this is part of the sex instinct mentioned above. In itself it is good; but original sin has made it inordinate and pretty hard to manage at times.

It is likewise part of God's plan that at this period of his life a boy becomes curious about sex matters. This is as it should be. The boy is developing new powers now—the powers of fatherhood—with which the unsuspecting youth might commit frightful sins—sins that might ruin his future as well as the girl's. Hence he should know his powers; he has a right to this knowledge. But he should get this information from the right sources. If there is anything at all you wish to know about these matters, you are at perfect liberty to ask any priest or your father or mother. You must not ask your companions: they do not know enough about the subject; and to talk about the matter with them is dangerous for you and them.

You realize therefore that you possess the right to matrimony and to the legitimate pleasures of the married state. You may, however, sacrifice this right for God's sake by becoming a priest or a religious. This giving up of the right to marriage in order to consecrate yourself to God in a special way is very pleasing to the Lord.

I must not forget to refer to a phenomenon that you must understand at your age. You see, in the act of generation the vital principle which the father gives towards the new human being is a sacred fluid which is formed in the body of man after a certain age, fourteen or thereabouts, at times much later. Nature has a way of relieving itself of this vital fluid—usually called the *semen,* seed—after it is stored up in the body. At night, often during an impure dream, this fluid is ejected from the body. There is in this emission nothing to be alarmed about. It is perfectly natural; even the saints had to suffer it. The only thing to remember is that you are not allowed to cause the emission intentionally; and, secondly, although you cannot help feeling the pleasure if you awake, you must not surrender yourself to the pleasure accompanying the emission. You are not bound to stop the emission; you probably could not do so anyway. The best procedure is: try to think of something else, forget about the emission, say a Hail Mary, and turn over and go to sleep. If you have any doubts in the matter, ask your confessor—if you speak of a nocturnal pollution or emission—he will understand what you mean. Any intentional causing of the emission is serious, especially because of the frightful habit it starts so easily. This sin is called self-abuse.

We realize now that the Sixth Commandment can be reduced to two main principles: first, one is never allowed intentionally to seek this pleasure which God has necessarily restricted to the married state, or to surrender oneself to the pleasure if it arises without being sought; everything depends upon the danger of causing this pleasure and consenting to it; hence if the danger is proximate and you have not sufficient reason for exposing yourself to the risk, there is question of serious sin.

The priest who has contributed the above instruction adds these further comments:

The instruction, it will be noted, will help to warn the boy against masturbation, without running the risk of teaching the sin by explaining the manner of committing it.

If there is reason to suppose that the boy has not lost his physical virginity irreparably—particularly if he is preparing to lead a life of chastity in religion or in the priesthood—it were good to stress the triumph of virginity, the climax and crown of chastity, its heroicity, its special aureola.* This information may serve the boy as a special protection against that fatal first *"only-once"* sin—the device so frequently employed by Satan. If we discover that the boy has lost his virginity irreparably, we must take care not to discourage him; we might tell him: "By repentance you may regain your virginity in the sight of God."

Many other points might be touched upon: temptation is not a sin; the means against temptation; when does temptation become a sin; further remarks will be suggested by the individual boy's difficulties, and each boy will call for individual treatment. Avoid physical details unless the boy's questions demand these; there is always the danger of the physical details' continuing too vividly in the boy's imagination. Above all, do not fail to stress the beauty of chastity—and, while warning the boy about the pitfalls, be sure to encourage him in the spirit of a loving and understanding father.

With regard to the instruction submitted, I feel satisfied that it has been of benefit in each and every case where I gave it, at least as far as my knowledge goes,

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* Cf. *infra,* p. 412.

> and I am in a position to follow up cases long after the instruction has been given. I know of no single case where the boy has suffered any evil effects from the instruction, and I made certain in each case that the information was clear and specific.

We note that the instruction contains the essential information and sublimates and supernaturalizes the whole field. The girl should be told in a similar way and in due time about the menstruation as being a sign of approaching womanhood. The Rev. Dr. John M. Cooper believes that a brief, simple, and affectionate explanation of potential motherhood should be given at the same time. Dr. James J. Walsh gives some helpful hints on the subject[8] and advises that the girl be told in time that blood may appear; otherwise she may wash or do something foolish about it. She must be warned to take certain prudent precautions, and then to rest at these times, even though this involves the giving up of social engagements of one kind or another. These renunciations are only a foretaste of the necessary sacrifices that she will have to make when she becomes a mother. The occurrence of her menstruation provides a ready opportunity for simple warnings with regard to permitting any liberties, or allowing her imagination to become excited as the result of reading or of moving pictures, or as the result of the intimacies of dancing or of sport.

Both boys and girls should be instructed plainly about the temptations characteristic of this period because of the inter-sex attraction. The boy should be placed upon his honor with regard to his attitude towards girls, and girls on their part should be trained to set the standard.* Parents and teachers can hardly speak too plainly in warning girls against accepting automobile rides from strange men or women. The young, gay, carefree, and, of course, unwise girl may be flattered by the attention shown her by a strange man. She may think it a lark to exchange words with him. She may soon be bold enough to accept his invitation to "ride home." Alas, it may then be too late.

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[8] "Sex Instruction," in: *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, Feb., 1930.

The following account furnished by a Catholic layman describes situations that are not confined to any one city:

> I have seen automobiles drive up to a street car platform on —— Street about 9 p.m., and men in them go almost as far as to seize a lone girl from the platform. Such automobiles may be observed "cruising" around and around. I have seen a girl consent to talk with such men while they urged her to ride with them, and I have seen the girl waver, and at last dash off for her street car. Something saved her from the tragedy.

Concerning the question of venereal diseases, children of pre-adolescent years should not be told anything, though they should be trained from early years not to use the public towel and drinking cup, as a measure of protection against contagious diseases in general. But adolescents may be told plainly of the dangers of venereal diseases, and warned that these diseases are contracted almost always from sexual intercourse, and one of them may be contracted by lesser liberties like kissing, if the person kissed happens to be diseased.

The Rev. Dr. John M. Cooper thinks it quite necessary to insist that the girl about to be married should be told frankly by her mother or by the family physician, in case the girl does not know, in what the marital relation consists. It would be criminal to keep such knowledge from even the most "innocent" girl, as it would be tantamount to running the risk of grave consequences to her happiness and the happiness of her future husband.

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* Cf. *infra*, pp. 293 ff.

One word of warning: in giving sex instruction to the young we should never bring out the fact of the pleasure associated with sexual acts. The internal secretion of the sex glands is carried by the blood to muscle, bone, brain, and nerve, and must be conserved if the boy wishes to attain to vigorous manhood, in body, mind, and will. It is imperative that this secretion should not be wasted for the sake of the pleasure. But let the boy be told of the pleasure connected with sex experiences, and his fancy will be active in conjuring up images, and of what may be possible, and so his mind may eventually be debauched. Hence the boy should not be informed even in early adolescence about the pleasure connected with sex experiences.

However, under present conditions it is doubtful whether this knowledge will be kept from the young for any length of time, and, once the boy has learned of it, he must be instructed that sexual pleasure may not be sought for its own sake, but that it is intended by God as inducement for the performance of the marriage rite, and that the enjoyment of this pleasure entails most serious obligations.[9]

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[9] Cf. Hermann Muckermann, S. J., "Das Wissen in den Entwicklungsjahren," in: *Das kommende Geschlecht*, May, 1925, p. 24.

Father John F. O'Hara, C.S.C., has compiled the following summary of what can and should be told in connection with the instruction on the Sixth Commandment.* It may be of interest to note that the *Instruction* has been printed for several years on the back of the University of Notre Dame Calendar. Priests, parents, and teachers should find this summary helpful in selecting whatever point may call for emphasis in any given case:

An Instruction on the Sixth Commandment

"God could have created all people at once, or He could have created bodies directly as He does souls, but God created man "in His own image and likeness," and as a part of this likeness He gave man a share in His creative power, which is the power we find the most awe-inspiring when we contemplate God in His works. It is the great desire of God that heaven be peopled with saints who will be happy with Him eternally; yet He makes the creation of a soul dependent upon the will of a man and a woman.

"Herein we see the tremendous responsibility of marriage. It is a partnership, not merely between man and woman, but between a man and a woman and God. God is not mocked. A terrible judgment awaits the man or the woman who tries to cheat God of His share in this partnership.

"Grave cares and responsibilities attend the use of this creative power. Whoever assumes responsibility for the life of a child must give that child a twofold education, material and spiritual: it must be put in a position to make a living and gain heaven. Sacrifice by the parents for the child begins with the life of the child and ends only with death. Selfish men and women who foresee these pains and cares and disappointments are tempted strongly to forego parenthood; God knows these temptations and supplies motives to offset them—the instinct of fatherhood and motherhood, the love of children, the desire to have the companionship and solicitous care of one's own in the declining years of life, and the like. The strongest present incentive to the act by which God's plan of creation is carried on is the pleasure, both mental and physical, experienced in the act itself.

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* "Report of the Prefect of Religion," in: *Official Bulletin of the University of Notre Dame*, Jan., 1930, p. 36.

"This pleasure is not evil in itself; it is good when it is used as a means to the end God intended it to serve, in lawful marriage (the stability of which insures to the child the care of both father and mother in its education). But it is an abominable evil, hateful alike to God and man, to seek this pleasure for itself without regard to the end for which God intended it. If the procuring or voluntary acceptance of this pleasure aside from its lawful end were not a mortal sin, no one would assume the burdens of married life, and God's plan of creation would be frustrated. It is evident, therefore, that any thought, word, desire, reading, conversation, or act that produces such pleasure is forbidden under pain of mortal sin when it is admitted voluntarily and without necessity; and if such pleasure arises accidentally from some necessary pursuit (for example, in certain studies in medicine) the will must be set steadfastly against the pleasure.

"Purity is a virtue so noble, so elevating, so manly, so strong, so brave, that even libertines stand in awe of it. Rakes and profligates may rail at it and sneer, calling it an impossibility, denying its existence; but bring them into the presence of purity and their foul tongues are silenced. 'Which of you shall convince Me of sin?' silenced the traducers of our Blessed Saviour. It is only under the influence of strong drink, which maddens reason, that a profligate loses his awe in the presence of purity. The pure man cannot be a coward: he has fought too many fights—and without the inspiration of applause from on-lookers. He cannot be base; his love of God has elevated him above baseness. He cannot be a traitor; fidelity has burned into his soul. Purity is an indispensable virtue for *men*.

"'I knew that without God I could not be continent,' said the Wise Man in the Old Testament. The grace of God is necessary for this fight, which *is* a fight, never-ending, but glorious. Atop the golden dome you will see the inspiration the University of Our Lady offers her sons for this fight: Mary, Virgin most pure, Mother of grace, Immaculate from the first moment of her being, who preferred to the dignity of being the Mother of God, fidelity to her promise of virginity. In the tabernacles of Notre Dame, "the City of the Blessed Sacrament," you will find the Food that makes Notre Dame men strong for the battle. Notre Dame loves the Blessed Sacrament. Mary leads you to Jesus."

SEXUAL NECESSITY—A MYTH

While the knowledge of sexual pleasure should be kept from the young people as long as possible, priests, parents, and teachers should impress upon the young the fact that in the case of the normal man or normal woman there is no such thing as sexual necessity. Wrong notions in this regard are widely prevalent among our people. Dr. Howard B. Woolston, who conducted a nation-wide investigation, reports

> the widespread notion among men that sexual activity is imperative and that the man's vitality is weakened unless he has indulgence. Recent statements by eminent physicians flatly contradict this assumption, but the idea still prevails in many quarters, because it fits in admirably with inclination. A man's training and manner of life establish his attitude towards this matter. So far as recent investigations show, the necessity is not physiological, but merely psychological. The habit of indulgence, once formed, unquestionably becomes insistent, and certain abnormal nervous conditions may result from the excitation and repression of sex impulse.[10]

Mr. Walter L. Hughes found in his investigation that wrong notions were circulating freely among the young. To the question, *Has anyone ever tried to give you the mistaken idea that sex intercourse is necessary for the health of the young man?* about 80 per cent of the total number of 1,029 replied. Forty-four per cent of the replies were affirmative.[11] While our own investigation does not show the same high percentage among Catholic people, the situation is bad enough. The following question was included in the questionnaire sent to 500 pastors: *Is it your impression that our Catholic young people are much exposed to the propaganda that sex indulgence is necessary for physical and mental health?* Replies were received from 359 priests; 108 answered "yes"; and 251, "no."

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[10] *Prostitution in the United States*, New York, 1921, p. 80.

[11] "Sex Experiences of Boyhood," in: *Journal of Social Hygiene*, May, 1926, p. 267.

The facts furnished by our informants prove that our Catholic young men and women hear a great deal about sex necessity, about the evil of sex repression and sex inhibition, and that all kinds of physical and psychic ills will follow upon self-control. Hence it will be necessary for the priest to have ready the answers that will expose the sophisms of those who adduce pseudo-scientific facts to excuse their lack of will power.

For instance, when our people are told that "sex expression is as natural and as necessary as breathing," they may justly reply that sex expression is not at all necessary to preserve the life or health of the individual. The human race as such has the duty to preserve the species, but this duty does not rest upon the individual. While the individual must eat, drink, and breathe to preserve his life, he may use sex only through the medium of marriage, which has been instituted by God for the perpetuation of the race. The sex powers are given to the individual to be used for the good of the race. This explanation will suffice also for answering those who quote the command of God given to our first parents: "Increase and multiply."* This command was addressed to the race as such and does not impose an obligation upon every individual to marry.

Our people should be told emphatically that there is no temptation so powerful that it compels a man, acting with the help of divine grace, to commit a sinful act. For this we have Scriptural warrant: "Let no temptation take hold on you, but such as is human. And God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able: but will make also with temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it.''[12] Again, ''For God does not command impossible things, but in commanding admonishes that thou do what thou canst; and that thou seek help for what thou canst not: and He helps that thou can; 'Whose commandments are not heavy,'[13] 'Whose yoke is easy and Whose burden is light.'[14] For the sons of God love Christ; and 'they who love Him keep His commandments,'[15] as He Himself testifies, which surely by divine help they are able to do.''[16]

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* Gen. 1, 28.

What God said to Cain: ''The lust shall be under thee, and thou shalt have dominion over it,''[17] is true of the whole field of sex. The sex instinct may curtail the freedom of the will, but cannot destroy it entirely. We know there are many physicians who hold contrary views, but the majority of medical authorities maintain that man can always retain control over the sex urge. Dr. Krafft-Ebbing says: ''It is a fact that a man who is normal, mentally sane, and not under the influence of alcohol or other drugs will never be in a position that the sex urge will control all his thoughts and feelings, allow no other consideration to hold sway, and drive him with physical force to indulgence.''[18]

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[12] I Cor. X, 13. [13] I John V, 3. [14] Matt. XI, 30.

[15] John XIV, 15.

[16] Council of Trent, Sess. VI., On Justification, I., in: Denzinger-Bannwart, *Enchiridion Symbolorum,* Freiburg, 1928, pp. 271-272. [17] Gen. IV, 7.

[18] *Psychopathia Sexualis,* 13th ed., New York, 1907, p. 50. For similar statements of European physicians, cf. Ribbing, *Sexuelle Hygiene und Ethik,* Stuttgart, 1896, pp. 20ff.; Gruber, *Hygiene des Geschlechtslebens,* Stuttgart, 1925, p. 48.

The British Social Hygiene Council published the following statement in March, 1926:[19]

> The British Social Hygiene Council are of the opinion that: (1) In the interests of the race and of the individual it is essential that the stability of the family in marriage be preserved, and social habits and customs should be adjusted to this end. (2) There is overwhelming evidence that irregular sex relations, whether in married or unmarried, lead to physical, mental and moral harm. (3) There is no evidence either from physiology or from experience that for the unmarried sexual intercourse is a necessity for the maintenance of physical health. (4) There is no evidence either from psychology or from experience that for the unmarried sexual intercourse is a necessity for the maintenance of mental health.

Dr. M. J. Exner interrogated the leading medical authorities of America on the subject. He received a ready and hearty response from 370 of those who endorsed the declaration that continence has not been shown to be detrimental to health or virility; that there is no evidence of its being inconsistent with the highest physical, mental, and moral efficiency; and that it offers the only sure reliance for sexual health outside of marriage.[20]

It was entirely in accord with Christian ethics and the best medical opinion of the world that the following Bulletin (G.H.Q. Bulletin No. 54) was issued from the General Headquarters of the American Army in France on Aug. 7, 1918:

> Sexual continence is the plain duty of members of the American Expeditionary Forces, both for the vigorous

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[19] *Journal of Social Hygiene*, Feb., 1927, p. 102.
[20] *The Physician's Answer*, New York, 1913.

> conduct of the war and for the clean health of the American people after the war. Sexual intercourse is *not* necessary for good health, and complete continence is wholly possible. Careful studies show that only a relatively small proportion of members of the American Expeditionary Forces habitually indulge in sexual intercourse.
>
> Commanding officers will urge continence on all men of their commands as their duty as soldiers and the best training for the enforced sexual abstinence at the front. Instruction, work, drill, athletics, and amusements will be used to the fullest extent in furthering the practice of continence.
>
> By command of General Pershing
> Official:
> (Signed) Robert C. Davis, James W. McAndrew,
> *Adjutant General* *Chief of Staff.*[21]

It is very necessary for the priest and the parents to bring home to the young these doctrines. It is one of the favorite tricks of Satan to create the impression of the necessity of sin and the weakness of human nature, and, abetted by the false doctrines of the world, he may succeed in discouraging the boy or the girl. The doctrine of the power of the will should be made clear to the children. The first symptoms of the sex instinct are weak, and may be controlled more easily than when the sex urge has grown into full strength. Hence we must take pains, especially in the beginning, to raise the hopes of ultimate victory and teach the power of control over the lower impulses. An important factor in this respect is the faith in one's own strength aided by the power of grace.

Priests should realize the need of warning parents to keep away from such books and lectures as talk about the impossibility of sexual control, or the necessity of universal sex expression. It is unfortunate that the psycho-pathology of sex has become so widely circulated among those who are not well trained in physiology and psychiatry. We must take measures that our people, both young and old, be properly informed that the moral law is in profoundest harmony with the fundamental laws of life, and that everything that is moral is also truly hygienic. There is no biological or physiological foundation for the belief that a man needs to have sexual intercourse in order to develop his sex nature and his manhood. Such belief is merely used as an excuse for weakness of the will and for selfish indulgence.

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[21] *Journal of Social Hygiene*, July, 1919, p. 308.

Dr. Sigmund Freud admits: "It is safe to say that most men would be none the worse, but all the better, for greater self-restraint; and this not only in deed and word, but also in thought."[22] We should like to correct this statement to the effect that *all* men would be none the worse, but all the better for greater self-restraint. Moral laxity, as Dr. Stowell admits when quoting Freud, has often been explained if not advocated upon physiological grounds, but this is merely the excuse of those who do not wish to keep within the pale of chastity. Physicians and students of social needs throughout the world are now united against such propaganda. The sexual necessity is a myth.

The genesis of the sex urge is not physiological, but psychic. The imagination plays a greater rôle than the senses. It is all-important to remember this fact. The sexual urge is principally nourished by the imagination. The extent to which physical health depends upon the mastery of the spirit over the body has not yet been fully realized. Professor Foerster observes that weakness of the will with regard to sexual temptation makes a man less capable of resisting any sort of physical or nervous disturbance. Modern psychotherapy proves that the secret of all self-development and all true health lies in government by the spirit, by the center of personality. Psychotherapy and mental hygiene aim at securing nervous and physical health by building up will power and stimulating the spirit to assume its proper position of control.* The idea put forward by some modern writers that the restraint of sex impulse is injurious to health can best be met by an assertion of the hygienic value of severe self-control, and of the danger to health which results from a weakening of spiritual forces. It is impossible that any form of sexual intercourse which is condemned by a man's truer self can ever be a source of health. In reply to those physicians who still cling to the obsolete view as to the danger of sexual continence, we might quote Comte's saying, that doctors who bear in mind only the animal side of human nature should confine their practice to animals—they should become veterinary surgeons.

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[22] William L. Stowell, *Sex for Parents and Teachers*, New York, 1924, p. 171.

Professor Foerster dwells at length[23] on the alleged serious effects of sexual abstinence and shows that the scientific evidence is entirely insufficient. He is of the opinion that the majority of so-called continent young people who visit doctors with complaints of a sexual nature are not really living in a continent way, but have injured themselves by some kind of abuse. Or, they are continent in practice but impure in thought. Or, they may indulge in too rich a diet, do not take sufficient exercise, and stimulate their lower impulses with excess of alcohol. Foerster agrees that under such circumstances continence becomes a torture. He who practices real self-control, however, can afford to ignore all such hypochondriacal errors. He will know by experience, especially if he is a man of strong passions, that ruling over undisciplined desires brings with it an increase of will power and a sense of inward joy. This will convince him, as nothing else could, that his manner of life cannot be inimical to health.

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* Cf. *infra*, pp. 332 ff.

[23] *Marriage and the Sex Problem*, New York, 1912, pp. 181-182.

Dr. Monakow, the famous psychiatrist of Zurich, says: "My experience of forty-five years as psychiatrist and neurologist compels me to say that continence does not produce neuroses, but sexual vices do. Those doctors who consider sexual continence to be harmful ignore the tremendous importance of the moral factor. We have not given sufficient attention to the biological factor involved in sinning against one's conscience."[24]

There can be no doubt that a healthy optimism coupled with prudence will compass good results even in bad cases, rather than gloomy views. The Swedish physician, Professor Sved Ribbing, confessed in an address to students: "I repeatedly received intimate communications from physically and spiritually healthy students about the problem of leading a chaste life, and they assured me that I had not sufficiently emphasized the ease with which sensual desires can be curbed and controlled. In my twenty years' experience with young and old people of all classes, I have never come across a single one who declared self-mastery in sexual matters impossible, provided, of course, there be good will.'' The same authority was right in describing the factors that make continence difficult: ''The struggle to live chastely would not be so difficult but for books, pictures, and phantasms which unduly excite the mind and the feelings.''

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[24] Joseph Schröteler, S.J., *Die geschlechtliche Erziehung*, Düsseldorf, 1929, p. 71.

St. John Chrysostom even in his day used arguments very similar to these when he addressed the young people:

> When you yield to lewdness, you do not escape responsibility. Had other youths not lived chastely in the past and at present, you might have some excuse. You behold others who keep themselves clean and honorable in their lives; and you cannot master your youthful passions? You see how others overcome a thousand times the allurements of sin; and you scarcely hold out once. Do you want to know the cause? It is not your youth, for then all young folk should be impure; but you burn because you throw yourself headlong into the fire. When you attend theaters and feed your eyes on nudity, you not only experience some pleasurable sensations, but you thereby kindle in your flesh a feverish glow. Thus you cause your own disease. . . . It is easy to lead chaste lives, provided we have the will to do so.

Most Catholic writers seem to realize that the opinion about the harmfulness of what is called sex repression is quite common among our young people. For instance, Father Martindale takes up the subject in his booklet[25] and disposes very well of the objection that is often brought against the observance of the law of God and nature. He admits that to yield to the sex urge will, indeed, quiet a man down for the moment, but that the policy is shortsighted as well as immoral, since the effect does not last. The system is like drug-taking: the victim needs larger doses, more and more often; they produce less and less effect, and worse reactions; and they stupefy the addict for the rest of his life. The proper way for a human creature to deal with itself is to use fully human means, namely, the intelligence and the will, and not merely to try to sate the emotions and to stun the nerves. Father Martindale brings out clearly the difference between suppression and self-control. No man must allow anyone to suggest to him, that by trying to live a chaste life he is trampling out his instincts, trying to crush human nature out of himself. No one can do that, to start with; nor does God. Who made man and his nature, wish anyone to do that. Unintelligent, tyrannical denial of human instincts does do harm: it exasperates the nerves, and the victim will probably break out in another way:

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[25] *The Difficult Commandment,* New York, 1927, pp. 32-34.

> Take a sailor who wants to get on shore and find a woman, and who is forcibly prevented, say, by spraining an ankle. *He* is being suppressed, and very likely his nerves get desperate, and it will be the ship's boy who suffers. But the man who for a clearly seen reason freely governs himself is not trampling on a good thing in himself, but gladly subordinating it to a *better* thing that he wants *more*; just as a man will freely and easily abstain from a heavy meal before a football match in which he wants to shine, however hearty be his appetite. He would call anyone a fool who said: "You are cruelly trampling on your instinct for beef and beer." I don't deny that there are moments when a man will need to do

himself some violence; but I am speaking of the normal man at normal times, and saying that the *policy* of self-indulgence is a bad one, and that the generalization that self-control does harm is a lie.

It is considerations like these that will assist a priest as well as a physician in advising men who are tormented and who are almost mastered by the sexual impulse, who struggle unceasingly under the influence of terror lest they should commit a mortal sin by yielding to the urge. The mental condition of such persons—especially if they are young men—is in some cases such that a doctor tells me he can understand why some physicians doubt whether they are not justified in advising them to indulge in illegitimate sexual intercourse. Such a policy on the part of the physician would be driving out the devil by Beelzebub, and the last state of the miserable wretch would be made worse than the first. Let nobody be rash in passing judgment on such victims of their uncontrolled passions, but let the priest or physician inquire carefully into the mental or physical causes of their pitiable state. Their state, of course, will never justify a surrender to temptation, but a careful study of the causes will assist both the priest and the physician in discovering proper remedial measures.

It is a hopeful sign of the times that medical literature is in agreement with the law of God in the matter of sexual continence. Medical writers recognize that it is not the most virile men that are licentious, but those with weak wills. A missionary who was preparing to give a retreat to physicians consulted a learned Catholic doctor as to what he might say on the subject of medical ethics. The physician replied: "State plainly your teachings of moral theology, and you will be giving the doctors the code of medical ethics that is recognized by the best men in the profession to-day."

We believe that the essence of the problem is the interior control, the attitude that we get the patient or the penitent to assume towards the subject of chastity. A debauched mind and a diseased will may find the practice of chastity quite arduous indeed. G. Stanley Hall confessed: "The most rigid chastity of fancy, heart, and body is physiologically and psychologically imperative, nor is it hard if continence is inward, for nature in all healthful bodies brings normal relief."

While the supernatural arguments for chastity and continence are in the long run the most effective, we should not overlook the natural motives that may be adduced for practicing the beautiful virtue. The natural reasons for pre-marital continence may be summarized as follows: Pre-marital continence makes for physical and psychic health; it removes the danger of contracting hideous venereal diseases; it follows the principle of fair play, and gives to the prospective wife purity for purity; it withdraws support and encouragement from the organized social evil, and is a fit preparation for marriage insofar as it reserves the sexual functions for their legitimate use in accordance with the principle that sexual union is moral only as love interchange.[26]

In general, the tendency of parents and priests should be positive and not negative, optimistic and not pessimistic, encouraging rather than threatening. Instead of painting the hideous picture of vice, we should take more pains to paint virtue in her true form as attractive beyond words. By so doing we shall be acting in the spirit of the instruction quoted by Pope Pius XI in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth:*[27] "Speaking generally, during the period of childhood it suffices to employ those remedies which produce the double effect of opening the door to the virtue of purity and closing the door upon vice."

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[26] Cf. Maurice A. Bigelow, *Sex Education*, New York, 1924, pp. 160-163.

Our young people should be encouraged to seek happiness where alone it can be found—in doing God's holy will. They may find pleasure in sin, but never happiness, for happiness is pleasure of which one need never repent. Young people should be told plainly of the trick of the Devil and his instruments among men, for they play upon the ignorant imagination of the inexperienced and represent sin as offering pleasures which prove, upon being tasted, to be but gall and wormwood. St. John Chrysostom pictures graphically the foolishness of him who anticipates the pleasures of sexual sin in a sort of feverish excitement, and who in the moment of sin is beside himself with intoxication, while after the sinful indulgence he has naught but remorse for all his pains.

Let us assist the youth who stands at the parting of the ways—on the one hand the alluring road of sensual pleasure, and on the other the more manly path of duty—by telling him the words of Lowell: "If one follows the path of duty he shall find her finally more beautiful than pleasure, and with infinitely more to give.'' What an infinite reward is promised to him who makes the right choice: ''Blessed are the clean of heart for they shall see God'';[28] ''no price is worthy of a continent soul.''[29]

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[27] P. 23.

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[28] Matt. V, 8.

[29] Ecclus. XXVI, 20.

CHAPTER IX

HOW SHALL IT BE TOLD?

What Father Gerrard wrote some twenty years ago is even more true at the present time:[1] "It is a healthy instinct that counsels silence in sex matters, but in our day healthy reason counsels speech. How shall we compromise between the two demands? Let there be speech, but let it be reticent and discreet." In this delicate matter we must avoid extremes: there is the one extreme of saying too much, and the other of saying too little; another extreme is speaking too late, and another is giving information before there is need. To strike the golden mean is a question of art rather than of science, and everyone who ventures to break the silence on this subject may well breathe a prayer to the Giver of all good gifts for light to hit upon the proper words, the proper tone, and the proper time.

We believe that the natural ignorance of the child is a good thing and should be preserved as long as possible. But, on the other hand, we do not believe in any attempt to create or foster ignorance that would be artificial or unnatural, or, in our day, impossible. The purpose of sex instruction should be to decrease the anxiety in these matters and not to increase the fears. Instruction should be a safeguard against dangers, and not a pitfall of new snares.

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[1] *Marriage and Parenthood*, New York, 1911, pp. 139-140.

There should be nothing vague or indefinite about the instruction. At the proper time the appearance of the sex organs should be made clear, their names should be learned, and their functions explained. There is an important factor in giving the technical names to children. The scientific dignity of these terms as substitutes for vulgar words should be stressed. Those who have had experience with boys and young men recognize that the technical terms have a great influence upon the attitude of the young people.

The process of reproduction should be described simply and briefly, following the method described on pp. 196-197 of our text. Any procedure that would concentrate attention on diagrams of the male and female sex organs while describing the act of sexual intercourse, must be condemned. While many recommend the biological approach of plant life, an effort must be made that there be no confusion with regard to human reproduction. Any such confusion would merely cloud the issue and stimulate curiosity. A small girl who had received such instruction from her mother was not satisfied and sought further information from a girl friend. The information she received from the girl satisfied her, but puzzled her with regard to her mother's previous information: "Why didn't mother tell me that when I asked her? She said it was a terrible secret that I mustn't talk about to anyone else but her, and then she told me about flowers and pollen and bees and I got all mixed up. I couldn't see that bees had anything to do with babies except to sting them."[2] A college woman in speaking of elaborate illustrations and analogy, says:

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[2] *Journal of Social Hygiene*, Feb., 1929, p. 83.

"Fanciful and involved attempts at explanation by means of birds and flowers did not help."

A Family Affair

Adequate and satisfactory information given at home will be among the best means to prevent the children from talking about the subject with their playmates and school companions. Efforts should be made by parents to create the proper tone in the home by insisting that certain subjects are family matters which should not be talked about outside the family circle. Such family affairs are money matters or intimate things in general, and information about the mysteries of life should be included in the category.

Given the proper relationship between parents and children, the latter will ask questions as soon as their curiosity is aroused. Parents should answer these questions frankly and truthfully from the beginning and by thus encouraging mutual confidence, the child will little by little acquire all the knowledge necessary before puberty comes. Sex knowledge that is imparted in childhood is received without shame or avidity, being then of no special emotional significance. Hence parents will avoid mutual embarrassment by answering frankly all the questions asked by their children.

Parents should be made to feel that no special methodology is required for giving whatever information is really necessary. It is significant of the intellectualism of our age that some writers insist on a special training for imparting the sex information. No fine speech will be required in the case of the mother or father. We may trust our mothers to find just the right words for the simple information that is required.

Dr. Otto Pasteau is emphatic in his declaration that "it is important to speak very simply, without affectation of mystery, in a way to awaken the conscience while closing the door of the imagination." A correspondent recommends that, beginning at a certain age, the parents should introduce references connected with sex into their conversation, as a matter of course, without leading the children to regard the subject as in any way peculiar. In this way the children would gradually acquire a knowledge of the absolutely essential facts of sex, without the introduction of unnecessary details.

It is well to keep away from young children lifelike illustrations, or photographs, such as are found in books of human anatomy. Some writers recommend the use of diagrams, since they explain all that is necessary without the danger of stimulation that might come from illustrated medical books. However, even diagrams may easily be copied and cartooned, and moreover recall the suggestive, crude drawings so commonly seen by, and passed around among, children of elementary school age.

How the thing is said is more important than *what* is said. The information should be given naturally and spontaneously. The Rev. Dr. John M. Cooper rightly insists that children are perhaps even more sensitive to tone-impressions than are adults. Hence he recommends[3] that the tone of the voice be "serious, kindly, sympathetic, reverent. It should border on the matter-of-fact, but be tempered with the sense of the sacred. It should not betray nervousness, embarrassment, or tense and suppressed emotion. Nor should it be colored with the hush of mystery. Neither in word nor in tone should the impression be given that the subject is a forbidden one, much less an indecent one."

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[3] *Sex Education in the Home*, Washington, D. C., 1921, p. 7.

The Need of Specific Instruction

Parents and priests should always be specific in their instructions. Much of the catechism instruction on the Sixth Commandment is probably useless because of its being so vague and indefinite.* A boy was justified when he declared after one such instruction: "Well, I really know as little now as before." The instruction consisted almost exclusively of "Don'ts." Let parents and priests explain clearly the concrete situations that will face boys and girls so that they will, at the moment of temptation, recall the warning of their father, mother, or confessor.

A soldier wrote to the priest who had conducted a retreat for the young men before they left home: "I often heard the song that you referred to in one of your talks when you brought out plainly its vileness. The other soldiers laughed at the song, and I might have laughed along if you had not warned me betimes. But whenever that song was sung, I remembered what you had said about it, and I could not sing along or laugh with the crowd."

Another soldier got, by mistake, into a French tavern of questionable character. He opened his eyes and remembered: "Just the situation that Father—— spoke about. I cannot stay here." And he returned to the street. The talks of the priest had given him a clear idea of the danger he would face, and when he was confronted with the danger his subconscious mind recalled to him both the warning of the priest and his own resolution made at the time.

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* Cf. *infra*, pp. 317 ff.

We grant that the sin may still be alluring despite the best of instructions, yet at the same time the boy will recognize that what looks so tempting is plainly labeled as something vile and sinful, and hence there is before his mind not only the prohibition "Don't" but also the resolution he made when he heard the priest's warning: "I will not do this." There may be a struggle, but the boy has been prepared for the struggle, and with the help of grace he will win much more certainly than if he had been brought face to face with the danger without any forewarning. In this way we shall be giving to our young people the necessary vigilance that Pope Pius XI speaks of in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*[4] as being so necessary in our day: "To-day more than ever they should be forewarned and forearmed as Christians against the seductions and errors of the world." In the matter of chastity to be forewarned is often to be forearmed.

However, prohibiting alone is not a sufficient protection. Mere prohibitions are sometimes worse than useless. They arouse the sporting instinct. Hence, instead of merely warning about the dangers of sin, we must bring out the charm of chastity. A boy will scorn what is vile if he is deeply interested in what is ideal and chaste. The most important information is not the instruction about the animal nature or

[4] P. 31.

even about dangers, but the knowledge of how the almost infinite power of the soul, aided by grace, can triumph over what is low and vile.*

It is regrettable that so much sex literature, entering into all kinds of unnecessary and often disgusting particulars, is to-day being widely circulated among the young. The procedure makes one think of a physician who, in explaining infectious diseases to children, would insist that the boys and girls be inoculated with the respective germs. In the face of this tendency, it cannot be too strongly emphasized that training in chastity does not consist in acquainting children with every detail of sexual physiology and with all the perversities of degenerate sexuality, but in introducing them to the nobler aspects of moral and spiritual life, and especially to the mastery of the spirit over material things. Father John K. Sharp is right when he says that in this sphere, perhaps more clearly than elsewhere, we see the ineffectiveness and positive harm of negative teaching:[5] "We say a furtive word about the wickedness of impurity, but less on the saintliness and power of self-restraint, or the beauty of purity. Because of this and other faults in method, coupled with the harmful channels of misinformation and sin, the child learns more of the vice than of the virtue." The young people should be given to understand, as Professor Foerster remarks, that the control of the spirit over the sexual emotions does not mean that the latter should be crushed, but that they should be inspired, enriched, and purified to play their right part in life as a whole; this calls not for an impoverishment but for an enrichment of love. As Kingsley said: "If a man is to love nobly, he must have lived a noble life."

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* Cf. *infra,* pp. 404 ff.

[5] *Aims and Methods in Teaching Religion,* New York, 1929. p. 392.

The more spontaneous the instruction and the situation that calls it forth, the more natural will it be and the more wholesome will be the reaction on the part of the child. This was probably one of the ideas that Father Daniel A. Lord, S.J., wished to bring out in his *Pure of Heart* when he lets the pastor take the twins, Dick and Sue, out for a walk for the purpose of instructing these adolescents about moral dangers and their particular duties.

To sum up all that has been said about the mode of procedure: be brief, simple, clear, do not enter into details that are useless and disturbing, and be on the lookout for opportunities to impart the information under favorable circumstances.

We believe that it will be well to follow the general rules laid down by Geddes and Thomson in their book, *Sex* (Home University Library):

> Whether the sex instruction is direct or indirect, through hygiene or through nature study; whether it is given by the parent or by the head of the school, by the science teacher or by lending booklets—care must be taken not to anticipate interest; not to excite; not to say what is untrue; not to teach what will have to be unlearned afterwards; not to make false mysteries (such as dusting a pollen-laden stigma with a feather); not to deal with the pathological; not to frighten; and, above all, not to say too much.

CHAPTER X

THE CONTROL OF THOUGHT

Modern psychological research has brought out clearly the radical importance of our reflex thought and personal impulses, and has demonstrated how largely they bulk in molding our lives and the lives of those who make up our environment. Modern research reiterates the incisive statement of the Bible: "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."[1] While physical chastity is a moral achievement, it is not the deepest virtue. Nay, physical chastity cannot continue long without mental chastity. A clean mind is needed to have a pure body. There are physiologists who maintain that the greatest harm done to the individual who has long been a victim of the solitary sin is in the centering on imaginary sexual situations. Hence the insidiousness of what has been called mental masturbation.

Dr. Prince A. Morrow, one of the leaders in the sex hygiene movement, has rightly said: "The problem of clean living is primarily a problem of self-control, of the mastery of the mind over the body." Dr. Harry H. Moore uses a happy illustration in his book *Keeping in Condition*[2] to bring out the close connection between the mind and the body. Embarrassment may cause one to blush. As long as the mind dwells upon the subject of the embarrassment, the blood continues to rush to the face. One's will power cannot control the blood supply. The only way to stop the blushing is to focus the mind on some other subject. Sorrow, a mental condition, may cause loss of appetite, a bodily condition. Fear may cause marked disturbances in the digestive tract.

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[1] Matt. V, 28.

[2] New York, 1919, p. 48.

Realizing the importance of pure thoughts for the training in chastity, we submitted the following question to 500 priests: *What means would you recommend to train people to control sexual thoughts?* The replies received from 368 are listed as follows along with the number of mentions:

Frequent Communion	350
Frankness in confession	279
Prayer when tempted	274
Live habitually in the presence of God	271
Clear idea of what is required for a mortal sin in this matter	269
Work and play	211
Control of eyes	179
Control of reading	154
Wholesome distractions when tempted	148
Avoid day-dreaming	139
Keep the memory pure	132
Don't expect to have bad thoughts	129
Don't play with dangerous thoughts	121
Keep physically and mentally healthy	113
Calmness when tempted	99
Keep interested in worth-while things	84

No one familiar with the doctrine of Holy Communion will be surprised to see the connection between frequent Communion and purity of mind. The Bread from Heaven will produce heavenly thoughts, and the Body and Soul of the God-Man received into our hearts lets us partake of Divinity. St. Augustine lets Christ say to the soul: "Come and receive; have no fear: I shall not be changed into thee, but thou wilt be changed into Me." It is significant to find among the answers given by Notre Dame University students the following statements about the fruits of Holy Communion:

> It has given me the power to banish impure thoughts, for which I had a seemingly unconquerable desire before I began daily Communion.
>
> The fact that I went to Communion this morning and am going again to-morrow always comes to my mind when I am tempted, and I lose all desire for sin. Lately I have been able to see and compare the emptiness and folly of earthly pleasure with the great rewards of true faith and industry, and I lose all desire for the former and resolve to pray harder for the latter.[3]

A Positive Method

Father Martindale has brought out forcibly the need of positive method of thought control instead of merely telling the penitent: "Resist those thoughts; fight against them." Such advice is bad psychology, and is practically useless and often quite harmful. The more a person tells himself not to think of a thing, the more, obviously, he is keeping his mind upon it. The more he struggles against it, the more his imagination gets excited. If he says: "I will not think of onions; I will *not* think of those onions; onions are things I *must* not think about"—why, onions get so stuck in his mind that his very eyes begin to water. Hence it will be well not at all to think about one's "bad" thought, but to think of something else. Say quickly: "Mary, help me; Jesus, save me." It is helpful to be able to *do* something, and, therefore, it is a good thing if we have a hobby we can turn to. But what will a man do at night when he cannot get up and start carpentering, or take apart his radio set?

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[3] *Official Bulletin of the University of Notre Dame*, July, 1923, pp. 52 ff. Sf. *infra*, pp. 370 ff.

Here Father Martindale advises a man to turn to what he *likes* to think about—some intellectual interest of his. Let him recall incidents from his favorite novel, or some striking play in a football game. Or recall the finest compliment he ever got, or the best joke he ever heard. But if he hasn't any such interests, he must still think of something positive—however absurd—like composing a baseball team of the nine fattest men he knows. He will think easily of four; the three next will be difficult to find; the last two, almost impossible. But his "bad" thought will have gone miles away. Or if he has ever had a narrow escape while motoring—and who has not had such an adventure?—let him recall the scene, and imagine what might have happened if he had not swerved his car sharply to the right. He is still shaking with the fright, but there will be no room for any emotions of any other kind![4]

Of course, no method will ever be devised that will keep dangerous thoughts from coming to one's attention. According to the judgment of an old missionary, we cannot expect rotten thoughts to stay out until half an hour after our death. But with the help of God and the exercise of strong will power, we can avoid harboring these thoughts. As the saying is, "We cannot prevent the birds from flying about our heads, but we can keep them from coming down and making nests in our hair." Just as physical nature abhors a vacuum, so mental laws demand that in waking moments the mind be occupied. The most effective way of keeping out mischief is to keep wholesome interests in the mind. One of the most wholesome results of athletic games is that they give boys and men so much to think and talk about.

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[4] Cf. C. C. Martindale, S.J., *The Difficult Commandment*, New York, 1927, pp. 23-24.

The general condition of the body has much to do with the quality of our thoughts. If we train our young people to take plenty of exercise, not to overeat, to retire at an hour that will allow them eight hours of sleep, to sleep with the window open, to get up when they first awake and take a bath, preferably a cold one, they will find it less difficult to keep their body strong and their mind clean.

The reason for the advice on guarding our eyes and controlling our reading is obvious. A man stated in a letter to the writer that he used to think himself immune, that he believed nothing would affect him, and hence that he was free to see or read anything. However, he admits in his letter that he is now paying the price for his indiscretions in that his fancy and memory often annoy him with what he learned in those years. There is nothing that we see or read but makes some difference and leaves some sort of impression. All these impressions will be stored in the subconscious mind, and the consciousness, whenever the sex urge is felt, will tend to recall whatever has been experienced or seen or heard on the subject.

A Cure for Scruples

Priests, in their replies to the questionnaire, report that with the increase of the practice of frequent Communion there has been a large decrease in scrupulosity with regard to fears of having sinned by thought. Priests find that a great deal is accomplished by instructing penitents carefully as to what constitutes a mortal sin of thought; that there must be: (1) a picturing of the person himself as enjoying sexual pleasure; (2) full attention to the seriousness of the situation, hence no mortal sin is committed if the person is half awake; (3) deliberate consent. The propaganda for sex instruction may remind the confessor of his duty to instruct his penitents clearly about what is a sin and what is not. There is no doubt that the ignorance of some people may be responsible for their regarding as sins what is altogether harmless. In this way what is no sin objectively, may become subjectively a mortal sin.

In case the penitent is not certain whether he has yielded to the thought, that is, dwelt unnecessarily on it because he was deriving pleasure from it, or in order to draw pleasure therefrom—he should not spend any time scrutinizing whether he lingered over the thought or not. Dwelling on the thought would simply revive it, and would excite the imagination anew. Let the penitent simply say that he has had bad thoughts, and accuse himself of any guilt there may have been in God's eyes. If he thinks he has deliberately taken pleasure in the thoughts, he should say so; if he is sure he did, he should say that. In case he habitually tries to get rid of thoughts, he may take the benefit of the doubt and feel free from the obligation of confessing the thoughts. But he should not spend time over the actual thoughts, neither when preparing for confession, nor at any other time.

It may also be advisable to train some penitents not to expect to have bad thoughts. If a person is always going about in a panic that he is going to be tempted, he will be tempted. Boys may be in a deplorable condition of nerves over some quite ordinary thing, like bathing, or having a hot bath by themselves, since they had got into the habit of thinking they would be tempted, and ended by supposing that there was a fate about it, and so gave up. Father Martindale wisely warns the young man that he has let himself get into the dreadful state in which everything *does* suggest "bad" thoughts to him, simply because he has thought of those things over and over again, and has (one might say) carved a sort of channel in his very brain for such thoughts to flow down. On the other hand, a man can by cheerful self-control become able to think very much what he pleases.

To some extent it is true that a man can train himself to be his own master in so far that he will make up his mind not to be affected by what he sees or hears; and if he does not expect that it will affect him, it may happen that he is not affected. "In this way a man goes forth into life so much his own master that not only he doesn't intend to be affected by what he sees or hears, but does not expect that it will affect him, and so it just doesn't." Father Martindale admits that such a result would imply full success, and that most men are still far from that. Still, it is the direction in which a man must be going, and a great deal can be accomplished by a hopeful outlook: "the root of the whole matter is the mind. As your thoughts are, so (almost invariably) will be your behavior. At least, no man's behavior is likely to be bad unless his thoughts are bad *first.*" A person's thoughts are the real personality.

It stands to reason, however, that such control of thought cannot be gained overnight. A beginning must be made early in training the child to banish thoughts of greed, stinginess, hatred, spitefulness, and so forth, and the habit of thought control thus formed will assist greatly in transferring the ability to the field of sex.

Some people have found it helpful to habituate themselves to say the prayer of the Roman Missal: "O almighty and most merciful Lord, favorably consider our prayers, and deliver our hearts from temptation to evil thoughts that we may deserve to become worthy dwelling places of the Holy Ghost." Others have found it helpful to bless themselves and their beds before retiring for the night, and then to trust calmly in the Lord. Some people, however, need to be warned not to give way to the physical impulse to bless themselves in public or to make grimaces, as the reactions will be harmful. But violent temptations attacking a person when he is alone may be banished effectively by blessing one's self or by strolling off for a visit to a nearby church.

Persons who grow despondent over the persistence of temptations should be reminded of God's wise purpose in using this means to keep them humble, in making them depend upon God, and in training them to be charitable towards others, who may have even more serious temptations to combat. Every temptation overcome will be a source of new grace and greater merit, and will assist in developing character. Such considerations will prevent a person from developing a complex of worry over the situation.

CHAPTER XI

THE PROBLEM OF BAD TALK

The problem of immoral talk is intimately connected with the training in chastity, and hence we included in the questionnaire sent to 500 priests the following question: *What means would you advise for habituating our young people to be chaste in their talk?* Three hundred sixty priests answered the question. Their replies are presented in the following list along with the number of mentions:

Inform young people betimes about the mysteries of life and instruct them that the subject is not to be discussed with their companions	310
Explain the difference between vulgar talk and unchaste talk	244
Expose the vileness of the practice	210
Explain Christ's warning about the punishment of those who give scandal	196
Warn against magazines and other literature that deal with pornography	173
Raise the tone of the school or the club	145
Expose the foolishness of boasting about sinful knowledge or sinful experiences	98
Use your influence against vulgarity and blasphemy on the stage and in the movies	97
Create a group spirit against smutty talk	96
Show the danger of corrupting others	68

The prevalence of vulgar talk among young people is notorious. G. S. Slavens and A. P. Brogan published in the *International Journal of Ethics*[1] the results of a survey made in the high schools of San Antonio and the University of Texas. High School boys thought that vulgar talk was the 7th in rank among undesirable practices, and that it ranked 4th in the frequency with which their boy companions indulged in it. High school girls thought it 7th in rank and 13th in frequency among their girl companions. University men thought it 8th in rank and 6th in frequency of practice among men, while university women thought it 5th in rank and 12th in frequency. In answer to a questionnaire sent out by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, 51 per cent of the boys who answered, and 21 per cent of the girls who answered, pleaded guilty of vulgar talk. The writer, who vouches for these figures, says that among the students of the state university that he attended, the "talk was not merely vulgar and foul; there was something morbidly eager about it that reminded one of the wallowing of swine."[2]

CREATING THE PROPER TONE

No one who has had experience with large numbers of young people will be surprised at these facts. Hence it is all the more gratifying to learn of what can be accomplished by creating the proper tone in a school. We shall refer elsewhere[3] to what has been achieved in this regard in some schools, particularly at Notre Dame University. The Rev. John F. O'Hara,

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[1] Oct., 1927, pp. 57-69.
[2] *America*, Aug. 29, 1925, pp. 479-480.
[3] Pp. 298f.

C.S.C., from whose excellent Religious Surveys we have been quoting so extensively, concludes from the following findings that at the latter university "most of the students' talk appears to be harmless, if not profitable." The findings were made in connection with the following question that was included in the Religious Survey of 1927-1928: *What are your favorite topics of discussion with your student friends?* Here are the answers received:[4]

Girls	234	Shows	31
Sports	213	Discipline	29
Studies	194	Philosophy	25
The faculty	81	Fellow-students	23
Religion	68	Home towns	23
Food	62	Knocking Notre Dame.	23
Vacations	51	Football	19
Notre Dame	46	Local events	18
Home	46	Marriage	17
News	44	Accounting	14
Politics	43	Good times	14
The future	40	Nonsense	12
Experiences	39	Scientific subjects	11
Everything	38	Morals	11
Books	37	Liquor	10
Sex	36	Weather	10
Life	31		

Father O'Hara believes that much can be achieved by enlisting the co-operation of the young people. He therefore decided to make the correction of improper speech, profanity, and scurrility the object of a special campaign. "Watch yourself" was the campaign slogan. He was encouraged to undertake this campaign by the showing the students made in the

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[4] *Official Bulletin of the University of Notre Dame*, March, 1928, p. 92.

Religious Survey conducted in 1927-1928. The replies to the following question seemed to indicate a good field of activity: *Have you ever done anything to correct improper speech in others?* The following answers were récived:[5]

Yes	350
No	206
Little	76
Indirectly	18
Too busy with myself	47
I have given bad example	53
I have given good example	4
It's no use trying	13
It's none of my business	4
I have encouraged it	2
I have ridiculed it	4

We shall quote some of the remarks made by seniors in connection with their answers to the question:[6]

> Yes. When they get rotten I pretend not to hear them.
> No, although I hate to hear it.
> I have refrained from using it myself.
> A jestful remark goes farther than a deliberate rebuke, and it serves the purpose, at least for the time.
> Occasionally, by ridiculing or by ignoring them.
> Both by example and by calling them for it.
> I tried but gave it up as a bad job.
> Yes; I have called them then and there. They called me, Bishop, but I got them to drop such speech, at least in my presence.
> I nearly always mention it to my friends when I hear them swear.
> I have tried to show them that I resent such speech.

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[5] *Ibid.*, p. 105.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 108.

Yes, by ridicule and by explaining the proper "thing to do."

I have worked on the boy next door; he sometimes talks as if he had been at one time an employee of the merchant marine.

No, although I resent it greatly.

I have corrected some of the boys. To my surprise, one of them apologized. He was a freshman; maybe that explains it. I haven't had much of a tumble from the others.

All this evidence would seem to prove that the priests were right in suggesting in reply to our questionnaire that much can be done by creating the proper tone in a school or in any other group. Data obtained from several character research studies prove that delinquents have the same notion about the "badness" of actions as have others. Knowledge as taught in the conventional way does not determine conduct. However, when knowledge is incorporated into the unwritten code of the group it becomes effective.[7] One priest found it worth while in this connection to tell his young people of the classification that proved helpful in raising the tone at Notre Dame University: two classes of young men violate the code of decent conversation—the subnormal and the degenerate. The young man with the child mind still revels in the indecency excited by the beginnings of sex curiosity, and when he grows up he will probably be as decent as other people. The degenerate knows nothing else to talk about; and it has been observed that any young person who knows all there is to know about sex, generally is a total ignoramus on useful and wholesome matters.

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[7] Cf. Mark A. May, "What Science Offers on Character Education," in: *Religious Education*, June, 1928.

However, it will be advisable before making efforts in that direction to make plain to the young people the difference between vulgarity and unchastity. The belief is common among priests, as we may conclude from the number of times the subject is mentioned, that there is gross ignorance among our people on this score. While every fully deliberate sin of outright unchastity, whether done in thought, word, or deed, is always a mortal sin, it is still necessary to distinguish between what is unchaste and what is only coarse, vulgar, improper, or in bad taste. Many of our people have erroneous notions on this point, and hence may regard as sinful what is merely vulgar. We cannot call anything unchaste, or a sin against the Sixth or the Ninth Commandment, unless there is therein such willful sexual pleasure as the person in question has no right to enjoy, or, for the case in hand, to describe for the enjoyment of others. As long as there is no question of forbidden sexual pleasure, there can be no question of impurity in the theological sense. Father Vermeersch says that conversations and stories that deal with very obscene matters are in themselves mortal sins, especially if such talk be carried on among young people and the obscene actions are described.[8]

A priest has found it helpful when instructing the young to imitate Father Fulgence Meyer in his description of what is merely vulgar.[9] In referring to the eliminatory functions, Father Meyer says: "There are certain functions which nature strongly prompts should be performed privately.'' He explains further that vulgar references to these functions are inelegant, yet not unchaste or obscene in the theological sense of the word. Therefore even the crude mentioning of, or reference to, these functions in coarse jokes, stories, and ancedotes is not to be classified as unchaste speech; or thoughts of them, as indecent thoughts.

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[8] *De castitate,* Rome, 1919, p. 393.

[9] *Youth's Pathfinder,* Cincinnati, 1927, pp. 102-103.

When Cardinal Newman says that vulgarity is the worst of sins because it contains so many little sins, he must have had in mind immorality in speech. But after the difference between vulgarity and immorality has been made plain, we must bend every effort to raise the moral tone of the groups to which the young people happen to belong. Human respect plays strange tricks in this matter. From a false sense of honor, young people try to appear unchaste in the eyes of their companions and to believe their comrades are so. In a crowd they lose the self-respect to which they cling most tenaciously when alone, but which escapes them as soon as they mingle with the group. While they are with the crowd they try to appear as bad as possible. Their talking may be for them a safety-valve, or a smoke screen, or a mere boast. Father Martindale speaks of ''robust temperaments whose owners can and do tell stories of a jovially indecent sort, while their behavior cannot have a word said against it; they can hear and relate and forget such tales even though they roar with laughter at them. I am not approving of this; but it happens; and the point is that you need not lose heart and think that the jolliest fellows are badly behaved simply because they tell such stories. It is, in fact, quite a common saying that it is the silent and easily shocked man who has to be suspected.''[10]

St. Augustine has made a frank confession of his own weakness in boasting of shameless deeds he never committed:

> Amongst my equals I was ashamed of a less shamelessness, when I heard them boast of their flagitiousness, and the more boastful, the more they were degraded; and I took pleasure, not only in the pleasure of the deed, but also in the praise. What is worthy of dispraise but vice? But I made myself worse than I was, that I might not be dispraised; and when in anything I had not sinned as the abandoned ones, I would say that I had done what I had not done, that I might not seem contemptible in proportion as I was innocent; or of less account, the more chaste.[11]

That this weakness is still quite common among our young people may be seen from the answers given by students of Notre Dame University to the following question:[12] *Do you ever try to appear more worldly than you really are? If so, why?*

The following answers were received:

Yes	335	Seldom	17
No	275	I used to	5
At times	65		

It may be surprising to learn that this prevalent manifestation of human respect was found to be much more common among frequent communicants than among their less fervent classmates. Father

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[10] *The Difficult Commandment,* New York, 1927, p. 38.

[11] *Confessions* (Pusey's translation), London, 1909, p. 25.

[12] *Official Bulletin of the University of Notre Dame,* Jan., 1928, p. 142.

John F. O'Hara, C.S.C., offers this explanation: the infrequent communicants are often worldly enough to escape the sneers of the worldly-minded, and have no need to pretend. While excuses do not remove this attitude from the categories of cowardice and hypocrisy, it is interesting to observe what reasons are offered:

To seem experienced	69
To try to be smart	61
Others do it	53
Human respect	49
To make an impression	45
It helps socially	28
It's human nature	27
To meet an occasion	11
For protection	10
I don't know why	10
It's a bad habit	6
It seems necessary	5
I am a fool	5
I get foolish at times	4
It's sophomoritis	3
Pride	2
I can't help it	1

THE NEED OF SELF-RESPECT

It will be for the priest and other leaders of young people to build up in boys and girls a sturdy self-respect that will remain with them in the noisiest and most boisterous crowd. The world is usually ready to take you at your own valuation; but you must first show the world that you value yourself. Let a Catholic boy or girl remember what the world expects of

Catholics and let their speech always be up to that high standard. They will do well to follow the two rules laid down in this regard by Father Martindale: (1) not to let anyone leave your company thinking more cheaply of Catholics; and (2) to help the weak rather than to hurt them. No man advertises his weakness, but in a mixed group one cannot know who is weak and who isn't. Father Martindale relates that he saw a man appalled, even almost physically sick, when he was told that *he* was the one who had (without guessing it) sent a hitherto innocent lad to a brothel. One pastor found it helpful to circulate among his young men a cartoon showing two men telling each other spicy stories while a small boy was eavesdropping. The caption on the cartoon read: "When a feller needs a friend."

There remains the further problem: when men tell vile stories, ought the Catholic to make an attempt to stop the bad talk? If the Catholic happens to be in control of the group, he should seek an opportunity of changing the topic of conversation. However, there may be occasions when a man is not in control, cannot leave the group, and cannot stop the telling of a bad story. However, the individual need never participate in the enjoyment of a smutty story, and he need never tell it elsewhere. Our young people should be trained to make it a rule never to tell a bad story.*

The Rev. Dr. Maurice S. Sheehy offers a few suggestions that should prove useful in the instance of a young man who has become addicted to the use of profane and obscene language "merely to make an impression":

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* Cf. Martindale, *The Difficult Commandment*, New York, 1927, pp. 38-39.

> I should ask him first of all: "Who will remember what you have said fifty years from now?" He will invariably reply, "God." Then I generally question him as to the reasons why he should take such cowardly advantage of the kindness of Our Lord. The word coward always hurts. I sometimes ask him how he would feel if he thought his mother was listening to him, and transfer the situation by suggesting that he owes more to God than he owes even his mother. I have often found it quite effective to suggest, "Don't be like Judas who betrayed Christ with a kiss; don't use the tongue on which His Sacred Body rests in Communion to offend Him."[13]

Several pastors report good results from distributing among their men a small card entitled *No More Indecent Stories.* The card describes graphically the harm that may be wrought by one who is in the habit of telling vile stories:

> Suppose only one person each month heard and enjoyed your smutty jokes. That would make twelve in a year. And suppose each of these again interested only one person a month in such tales. Even at this slow rate the bad seed which you sowed would multiply and bring forth 4,000 sins a year! Would to God that these 4,000 souls committed only the one fault of listening to these smutty jokes! But people, especially the young, think over these tales, repeat them in their mind, arouse themselves to immoral thoughts, desires and even actions. . . .[14]

What is said of vile talk is even more true of vile songs. One writer [15] confesses that he recalls vividly the words of a "smutty" song which he heard when a

[13] *Problems of Student Guidance,* Philadelphia, 1929, p. 116.

[14] Franciscan Herald Press, Chicago.

[15] Franklin W. Johnson, *The Problems of Boyhood,* Chicago, 1925, p. 50.

boy, which he has never repeated in speech, but which he can never forget. He admits that there are many things which he once learned laboriously, but which he would gladly remember, but cannot recall: a lesson for those who are responsible for the upbringing of youth.

CHAPTER XII

THE SOLITARY SIN

All authorities are agreed that masturbation is practiced at times by very young children. Dr. Liertz records the case of a baby six months old.[1] If the baby is seen to be carrying on this practice every effort must be made to break it up as soon as possible as the habit will grow worse if uncontrolled. The practice may be due to lack of cleanliness, or to some local condition which irritates the sensitive parts, and hence the baby should be carefully examined by the doctor. Dr. James J. Walsh describes the case of a baby nineteen months old given to masturbating because of a physical defect that was removed by a slight operation.[2] The treatment with babies consists almost entirely in imposing mechanical restraints, and in attention to keeping the organs clean. Such a baby should not be left to himself in bed after he is awake. Constant and patient watchfulness on the mother's part is required to break up the habit. Punishment is worse than useless.[3] The Rev. Dr. Paul H. Furfey believes that in the case of children it can generally be cleared up by simply distracting the child's attention from the habit. He finds that in only a few cases do sex practices among young children have an emotional value similar to masturbation among older children.[4]

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[1] *Wanderungen durch das gesunde und kranke Seelenleben*, Munich, 1924, p. 38.

[2] *Psychotherapy*, New York, 1923, pp. 484-485.

[3] Cf. Medicus, *Medical Essays*, Milwaukee, 1928, p. 490.

In general, the practice of self-abuse is begun much earlier than the average person would surmise. Medical men in general believe that the practice is widespread both among boys and girls. However, we cannot agree with Drs. Peck and Wells when they say: "The absence of adolescent masturbation is clearly an abnormal feature." These investigators admit themselves: "The absence is hardly impossible in the presence of very moderate sex urge or very special environment."[5]

With regard to the situation among girls, several studies indicate that before puberty, girls practice the solitary sin more frequently than boys; during their adolescence, however, they indulge less frequently than boys; but after they have arrived at maturity, they indulge in the practice more frequently than men, as they lack occasion for other sexual indulgence.[6]

It is encouraging to have all authorities who confined their studies to Catholic groups contend that the practice is not so general here as among the population at large. Father Vermeersch believes that more young men than medical men are aware of are leading pure lives. The same statement is made by Father Heilmaier.*

A Catholic physician compiled the following table from 100 case histories to show the ages at which the victims had learned of the practice from one or more companions:

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[4] *The Growing Boy*, New York, 1930, p. 47.

[5] "On the Psycho-Sexuality of College Graduate Men," in: *Mental Hygiene*, Oct., 1923, p. 703.

[6] Vermeersch, *De castitate*, Rome, 1919, pp. 167-168.

* *Katechetische Blätter*, 1917, p. 169.

Ages	Number of Cases
5-6	4
6-7	2
7	8
7-8	2
8-9	6
9	4
9-10	2
10	2
11	8
10-12	4
11-12	10
12	6
12-13	2
13	20
12-14	2
13-14	6
14	4
14-15	2
15	4
16	2

THE DANGEROUS AGE

From this table it is evident that the most dangerous period is that from about twelve to fourteen. Of the 100 cases, 56 had begun the practice at that period. Twenty-six associated the beginning of the practice with their eighth grade in school; 4 claim the seventh or the eighth grade; 6, the seventh; 8, the sixth or the seventh. Another dangerous period has been suggested as the time from about seven to nine. The boy is just beginning to get away from "his mother's apron strings," and may readily become a victim to bad company.

It appears that the "bigger" boys, or those who "know," find a delight in displaying their "superior" knowledge by initiating those ignorant of the sin. The motive does not seem to be born of malice, but indicates rather the eagerness of showing someone what he is still ignorant of; and since the age of the ignorant boy usually marks the awakening of the sex instinct, the lad is usually a willing victim.

For those who practice masturbation without having learned of it from another, the critical age seems to be sixteen or somewhat later. The above table includes none of those who learned of the practice spontaneously. One such boy began at fourteen, but he matured early; another began at sixteen while bathing; another, at seventeen.

Another Catholic physician who has been studying the subject for some 30 years vouches for the following facts:

> The vast majority of Catholic boys who are victims of the vice, begin the practice some time between the ages of twelve and fifteen. In some cases it does not even become a habit. In others, often in boys of strong health and character, it lasts about two years. It is common enough for it to begin at fourteen and end at eighteen; it may or may not come back after a respite of a year or so after eighteen. In other cases, and more rarely, it has been a fixed habit for six, eight, ten or even more years; and when this is the case it usually occurs with great frequency—say, twice a week, or even daily.

In many cases of Catholic boys where there has been opportunity for observation it has never occurred once.

The situation among Catholic girls and women is even better than what was found by these Catholic doctors among Catholic boys and men. One investigator states upon the basis of his experience extending over many years in different countries and among different races, and in various sections of the United States, that the ratio of female masturbation to male is less than 1 to 25.[7]

Older writers on the subject used to dilate on the "signs" by which parents or teachers could tell the victims of the practice. Such statements have been responsible for unfortunate and unjust judgments passed on individuals. Scientific writers are agreed today that there are no absolutely certain signs, and parents as well as teachers should remember that there is no sufficient evidence to warrant the belief that great diffidence, indigestion, pimples on the face, boys' lack of interest in girls, and numerous other popular "signs" indicate the habit.

EFFECTS OF THE HABIT

Modern research has done away with the exaggerated notion of the physical evils following upon the practice of masturbation. Not even the most frequent practice will of itself bring on softening of the brain, or paralysis, or locomotor ataxia.[8]

Children should not be told the ancient falsehood that insanity will surely result from handling the sex organs. A Catholic doctor tells me that this falsehood is still circulated widely, and is still believed by many. It is true that masturbation is a common habit of certain types of insane people and of some neurotics; but it is probable that the habit is more often one of the several factors rather than the direct cause of the nervous breakdown.[9] The masturbation has probably been due to mental and moral weakness; not the mental weakness, to masturbation.

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[7] Medicus, *Medical Essays*, Milwaukee, 1928, p. 142.

[8] Dr. H. Rohleder, "Die Masturbation," Stern (editor) in: *Die Erziehung und die sexuelle Frage*, Berlin, 1927, p. 298.

Yet it remains a fact that there may be evil physical effects. Dr. Hirschfeld found evil effects among 23 per cent of the victims of the habit; and Dr. Rohleder, among 31 per cent.[10] A Catholic physician with extensive experience writes on the subject:

> It is extremely difficult to judge of the evil effects that have followed from the practice of masturbation. Excellent physical health and a robust constitution are often found to exist in very bad cases; consequently, one hesitates to attribute to masturbation evils found in other cases. An inferiority complex and lack of power of concentration seem to be common psychic faults when the victims have been too reticent about their difficulty and have felt that they were alone in it; these have frequently disappeared or were lessened when the victim learned otherwise. Self-pity and other forms of selfishness have been observed in some confirmed cases. In moderate cases it seems difficult often to find any evil effects, either in mind or body.

Considering the evil effects as established by scientific investigation, we venture to say that even so careful a writer as the Rev. Fulgence Meyer, O.F.M., seems to exaggerate when he speaks of the physical consequences of the sin.[11] Many non-Catholic writers go to the opposite extreme and minimize the dangers. For instance, in *Sex Education: a Symposium for Educators*,[12] we read: "At puberty, especially in boys, when the reproductive instinct begins to function, an occasional indulgence in masturbation appears to be more or less normal but is usually discontinued as maturity approaches." The questionnaire sent out by Dr. Katherine B. Davis to college women says: "It is maintained by some eminent specialists to-day that auto-eroticism, including masturbation, is a normal stage in the development of the sex nature and must be passed through if sexual development is to be complete."[13]

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[9] M. H. Bigelow, *Sex Education*, New York, 1924, p. 143.
[10] Rohleder, *l.c.*, p. 298.

These assertions are characteristic of the attitude taken by much of the non-Catholic literature on the subject and indicate why we have said elsewhere that sex-hygiene books, if not written by Catholics, should not be recommended to our Catholic people. Any Catholic writing on the subject will bring out the essential sinfulness of the practice in that it shares in the specific malice of all sexual offenses against nature—the voluntary procuring of unlawful sexual pleasure outside the marriage act. Some victims of the vice may be brought to realize their guilt by being told that by committing the act they are destroying willfully "the elements of human life."

With regard to the evil results of masturbation, it is truthful to say that the consequences are generally worse for the mind than for the body. This is not denying that the habit may weaken the nervous system and indirectly affect general health, especially in adolescent and pre-adolescent years. The loss of the internal secretions is an important factor especially if the habit is excessive (and the habit is always liable to grow excessive, for greater excess is possible than in natural sexual relations) because of the waste of the product that should be taken up by the blood and that goes into the building of a man. A comparison of a gelding with a stallion will give a good idea of the part played by this secretion in building a boy into a man. While self-abuse does not wholly defeat this purpose, it impairs it, when frequently practiced, to the extent of taking the fine edge off a youth's condition. The internal secretion must be carried by the blood to muscle, bones, brain, and nerve, and must be conserved if the boy wishes to attain to vigorous manhood in body, mind, and will.

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[11] *Youth's Pathfinder*, Cincinnati, 1927, pp. 86-87.

[12] Washington, D. C., 1927, p. 31.

[13] *Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-Two Hundred Women*, New York, 1929, p. 96.

Yet the worst results are experienced in the mind and character of him who is addicted to the sinful practice. While the sin imposes a severe strain upon the nervous system, the strain is intensified by the period of shame and regret following each relapse. It is easy to understand the evil results upon the character. The victim of the solitary sin will gradually lose self-respect and, discouraged by his frequent relapses, he will lose his will power and eventually prove an easy victim to all kinds of temptations. Dr. H. Rohleder, who has spent thirty years in treating victims of masturbation and who has written extensively on the subject, says bluntly enough: "Masturbation corrupts the character."[14]

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[14] "Die Masturbation," Stern (editor) in: *Die Erziehung und die sexuelle Frage*, Berlin, 1927, p. 297.

The results of modern research support the familiar saying, *Omnis masturbator mendax*—the victim of self-abuse can hardly tell the truth. Weakness of will with regard to so essential a factor as chastity will gradually lead to disregard of the moral law in other fields also. Educators have at times been at a loss how to explain the impudence and insolence that are notoriously frequent in victims of the solitary sin. We believe that the whole procedure may well be an act of compensation. The boy has heard or read of the direful consequences of the practice, that insanity, paralysis, or lingering illness will result from the habit. In the catechism class or in the confessional he has been told that every one of his offenses is a mortal sin, and hence he is depressed with the consciousness of being a great criminal. He is ashamed of himself and regards his actions as disgraceful in the extreme. He has made efforts to break the habit, but succumbs to every new temptation, loses self-confidence and self-respect and, to heighten his misery, believes himself a marked boy, for he has heard that the masturbator carries about with him the signs of his crime and shame. Hence he is shy and keeps aloof from others, and is ever in mortal terror of being exposed publicly. But while keeping aloof, he decides upon a policy of compensation. He converts his inferiority complex into a feeling of conceit and pride. The more he loses in self-respect and the more conscious he feels of guilt, the more impudent will he grow in his demands for attention from others, for he thinks that in this way he will prevent his guilt from being exposed by those of his environment.

The habit of masturbation may bring on also a loss of memory and a decrease in the power to concentrate. Attacks of melancholia and hypochondria have likewise been traced to the sinful habit.

WHAT LEADS TO THE PRACTICE OF THE SIN?

Prevention is always easier than a cure and, therefore, before we take up the consideration of the ways and means of curing the habit, we must consider its causes.

Slightly over one-half of the group of 1,029 boys surveyed by Mr. Walter L. Hughes replied to the question, *What led you to begin masturbating?* The chief inciting cause appeared to be "boy's example" and "boy's talk." These two factors together constituted 67 per cent of the replies. Other replies attributed the beginning of masturbation to "girls" (8 per cent), "sex thoughts" (7 per cent), "sex desires" (6 per cent), "curiosity" (4 per cent), "pictures of girls," "night emissions," (each 1 to 2 per cent), "idleness," "an old man," "a teacher," "swimming," "a book," "shows," "animals" (each less than 1 per cent).[15]

A Catholic doctor informs me as follows on the subject of the causes of the solitary sin:

> Approximately one-half of the victims of self-abuse discover the practice themselves. In my practice I have found among the first causes of this self-taught vice are the following: reading a smutty novel (the victim was eighteen, had practiced fornication for two years, and had never heard of self-abuse); looking over some anatomical plates (this boy, thirteen, ran to his mother and told her he was bleeding to death); curiosity after hearing so much about it (two of these young men,

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[15] "Sex Experience of Boyhood," in: *Journal of Social Hygiene*, May, 1926, p. 266.

> each twenty years old, had been committing fornication); lying in bed awake in the morning (common); scratching to relieve itching; curiosity about pubescence, and so forth, including the common ones noted in treatises on the subject.—I should also mention the reading of realistic love stories as it usually arouses passion; sometimes, however, it causes disgust; again it leads to masturbation; again it leads to fornication—sometimes to the first offense—down a dark alley for fear of detection.

The facts as ascertained by Dr. Davis in her questionnaire sent to college women indicate that, of the married women, those who acquired the practice before they were fourteen, 52 per cent acquired it spontaneously or accidentally, while 41.5 per cent learned of the practice from others; while of those who began the practice in girlhood (between fourteen and marriage), 38.3 per cent acquired it spontaneously, while 14.3 per cent learned of the practice from others. Other replies from those who began the practice in girlhood attributed the beginning of the practice to "own desires" (18.8 per cent), "thoughts of lover" (8.3 per cent); while 9.8 per cent admitted the following as the means of acquiring the practice: day-dreams, reading erotic books, dancing, presence of men, and psychological reading. Dr. Davis found that 58.6 per cent of the unmarried women who practiced masturbation discovered the practice accidentally, while 32.7 per cent learned it from another person—64 per cent being taught by other girls, and 9 per cent being taught by women friends.[16]

Dr. H. Rohleder insists that weakness of will is the most important factor in contracting the habit of masturbation.* Among the other primary factors, he enumerates the following: (1) psychic diseases such as hysteria and epilepsy; and all nervous disorders, among which insomnia plays a large rôle; (2) the skin diseases that cause itching or inflammation of the skin, especially of the sex organs; (3) chronic constipation. The same eminent authority states that masturbation increases with the artificial life in the city and decreases with plenty of healthful work and the simple life in general.

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[16] *Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-Two Hundred Women*, New York, 1929, p. 109.

Among the secondary factors Dr. H. Rohleder mentions the premature enrollment of children in school, particularly if the youngsters are weak, anemic, or undernourished. He is in favor of allowing no children to do any school work before they are six. It is interesting to compare with this view what Pope Pius XI says in the *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth* on this subject:

> The declining influence of domestic environment is further weakened by another tendency, prevalent almost everywhere to-day, which, under one pretext or another, for economic reasons, or for reasons of industry, trade, or politics, causes children to be more and more frequently sent away from home even in their tenderest years.[17]

Dr. Rohleder admits that the company of children is chiefly responsible for learning the sinful habit, and finds the practice of compelling children to sit for the five or six hours of the school day to be a contributory factor in the case of children of six to fourteen. Among the contributory factors he mentions also dances and the frequenting of theaters and motion pictures. He also contends that the corset of girls by causing congestions in the abdomen, as well as tight-fitting trousers of boys are contributory factors.

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* Cf. *infra*, pp. 477 ff.

[17] P. 25.

Parents should keep a watchful eye over their children when sent to bed, as Dr. Rohleder states that many masturbate before they fall asleep. While children should have regular sleeping hours, they should not be sent to bed unsupervised when they are excited and not tired enough for immediate sleep. To punish children by sending them to bed is dangerous. In the morning they should arise as soon as they are awake. The mattress of the bed should be hard; the covers, light-weight; and the room cool, with plenty fresh air. Children should be trained to sleep on either side, rarely in the unnatural position on their back.

A Catholic doctor contributes the following notes based on his long experience with patients:

> Physical conditions may be responsible in causing relapses. Lack of cleanliness is sometimes a factor; in his endeavors to keep chaste, a boy may neglect the necessary care of sex organs. Not emptying the bladder before retiring for the night has also been found a factor at times; constipation likewise seems to aggravate the difficulty occasionally.
>
> As to the time when the sin is committed. Some find that the worst time is mid-afternoon; to others, night offers severe temptation, especially the time before they fall asleep. Some are able to restrain themselves entirely, or nearly so, while away from home at boarding school, but fall repeatedly during vacation. This may be due to some extent to the lack of the vigilance of their

regular confessor or spiritual director, for as a result of the incentives given them before leaving school, they often hold up well during the first half of the summer vacation.

For those who do well during the school term, i.e., as long as they are in direct touch with the spiritual director who is helping them—but relapse during vacation, perhaps one of the best helps might be to keep in regular touch with the director by letter—or at least agree to report as to conditions about the middle of the long vacation. The report need not enter into details, but might be limited to the bald statement, "I won out." The very thought of this report might serve as a deterrent from a complete surrender to temptation.

Others, however, have less difficulty while at home during the vacations than during the school year. The distractions incident to vacation seem a help to their weakness. It seems that this latter class includes especially those whose pronounced habit shows extreme weakness.—In the case of some, no time is too sacred for the sin: Christmas Day, Easter, Retreat; Sunday especially is for many a time of severe temptation.—Another important factor for some is the reaction from the strain of school examinations. The examinations over, the young people seek relaxation in dissipation and vice.

PREVENTING AND CURING THE HABIT

Valuable information was obtained from the replies to our questionnaire sent to 500 priests. The replies received from 360 are tabulated as follows, the figures indicating the number of mentions:

What means would you advise to prevent the habit of self-abuse?

Frequent Confession and Communion	350
Habit of prayer in temptation	338

Build up a strong will power	310
Proper instruction about what to avoid	301
Control of the companions of children	298
Examination by doctor as to physical or mental defects	216
Control of thoughts	211
Control of reading	210
Plenty of interesting work and wholesome play	208
Cleanliness	196
Advise against day-dreaming	191
Athletics and cold showers	189
Not to lie awake in bed in the morning	162
Circumcision if advised by the family doctor	112
Regular hours in getting sufficient sleep	96
Total abstinence pledge	91
Physical health	89
Temporary vow of chastity	84
Opportunities for wholesome and congenial companionship	63

What treatment would you recommend for the confessional for the purpose of curing the habit of self-abuse?

Find out what has started the habit, and treat accordingly	310
No generalities, but specific information and advice.	296
Patience and kindness	251
Encouragement as to possibility of gaining the victory	207
Inform the penitent that his case is not exceptional.	196
Train the penitent to keep himself occupied with work or play	182
Don't fill the penitent with fear	163
Give him an opportunity for frequent confession	91
Encourage penitents to tell you not only of their lapses but also of their victories	72
Suggest to the penitent not to give way to moods	43

A priest kindly submitted the following notes along with his answers to the questionnaire:

> If a priest does not realize the frightful hold the vice of masturbation may have upon the will of a lad, especially about the age of puberty, he may misunderstand boys who may have the best intention in the world and who are making every effort (within the power of their weak wills) to break away from the slavery of this—even to them—degrading sin, and who yet seem scarcely able to make any headway. Therefore, the zealous priest will not rest satisfied with suggesting merely ordinary remedies. He will, after having studied the case in question (no two boys—hence no two cases—are ever exactly the same) suggest every possible means, spiritual, physical, and psychological, towards effecting a cure. Of course, he knows a special grace is needed to accomplish a cure: "This kind is not cast out but by prayer and fasting."[18] But generally prayer and the Sacraments alone will not prove sufficient, at least not in cases of long standing. Besides prayer it will be necessary to strengthen the will power by forming a habit of sacrifice. Alas! our modern life knows so little of sacrifice, and hence the poor boy is, perhaps, not much to blame for his pitiably weak will. But after years of neglect he must now begin in earnest to use the food and medicine that build character. Sacrifice may be bitter, and the boy stands in need of much encouragement to continue faithful to his endeavor to put iron into his blood.
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> Non-Catholic writers may tell us a cure is impossible. Facts give the lie to that statement, and we should never admit defeat in any case, for we can always draw upon the inexhaustible fountains of prayer and the Sacraments.
>
> We must always distinguish clearly between two kinds of masturbators. The first class says: "Some day this will

[18] Matt. XVII, 20.

> stop." He who belongs to the second class says: "This won't stop unless *I* stop it." Those who belong to the first class may, and probably do, make valid Confessions; they do not intend to continue the practice forever, and feel that, somehow, some day, they will stop—but they don't. Those of the second class have had an awakening and realize that *they* must stop the practice if it is to stop at all. Probably this change of heart did not come until an understanding confessor opened their eyes to the true facts. It is to be regretted that some confessors do not realize the situation soon enough. In many cases the transition from Class One to Class Two is tantamount to a cure.

We note that practically all informants stress the need of proper information on the subject. Parents have again the first obligation in the matter, and they should be plain in warning their children, though they must be on their guard lest their very warning teach the sin to those who are innocent. Dr. Otto Pasteau in his report to the French Association of Christian Marriage suggests this instruction to parents:

> My child, you know the Fifth Commandment tells us: "Thou shalt not kill." Now the same Commandment demands that you should not injure your body in any way. That is the reason why we stop you from rubbing your eyes, as such rubbing might hurt them. For the same reason God does not want you to rub other parts of your body, as such rubbing might injure these parts that are just as important as your eyes. In case you should ever rub these parts of your body, you will have to confess it to the priest. Also pray to God that He will make you strong so that you will not get any bad habits.

The reader may object that this explanation is too suggestive and that it may teach the sin to some children. However, we agree with Dr. Pasteau that most parents do not realize, as do doctors, how frequently these bad practices occur among children. Hence we may argue that, if the child is still both innocent and ignorant, he will probably not surmise what the warning is about and will give the matter no further thought. However, if the child has committed the act, the warning will probably help him, or at least will induce him to tell his confessor about what happened, and the latter will then be able to inform his penitent about the nature of the sin.

In group instructions to children the habit should never be described except as "unnecessary handling of the sex organs." Whether the instruction be given to a group of children or to an individual it is dangerous to suggest that there is a pleasurable sensation resulting from the manipulation of the organs since the force of suggestion or curiosity has led some children to experiment with themselves until they formed the habit.*

With regard to boys of fourteen or girls of twelve, it is not advisable to give class instruction about masturbation. We have met some priests who have no misgivings about instructing groups of boys of this age, yet we prefer to advise the policy of warning them in general terms and urging them to seek advice from their parents or their confessor. With the girls, the latter policy is, of course, the only possible way for the priest to deal with the problem. Father Fulgence Meyer's phrasing may assist both parents and priests in their private instruction: "Self-abuse consists in wilfully arousing one's sexual nature, by means of impure thoughts, desires, looks, touches, speech, actions, or bodily postures, to what is called complete satisfaction or gratification.[19] *Quid Vobis Videtur?* contains a very full explanation that will be helpful in instructing boys.

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* Cf. *supra*, p. 204.

There is no excuse for silence when the priest is asked in the confessional for information. A Catholic doctor has told me of the harm that is done to men and women because of the lack of proper information on this point. From the cases he has told me about, I shall select three as typical of many:

> A boy of sixteen ventured to ask his confessor for information on the subject of self-abuse, but the information given was so incomplete that the lad got the false impression that the act was no sin at all. This impression continued until he was twenty-three when the reading of a book opened his eyes to the real facts. However, in the meantime he had contracted the habit of self-abuse, and found it an effort indeed to stop the practice.
>
> Another man complained that pious generalities are of no help whatever, and that in his own case he deduced from the platitudes spoken by his confessor that the acts of self-abuse which had been confessed, were no worse than venial sins and was in consequence lulled into false security.
>
> A third man used to wonder when he was a youth what it was that priests warned their hearers against when they spoke about handling the sex organs before going to sleep. He was twenty-two before he learned of the nature and seriousness of self-abuse. He had read in a book on sex hygiene that occasional acts were

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[19] *Youth's Pathfinder,* Cincinnati, 1927, p. 84.

perfectly normal, and never worried about his weekly indulgence in the sin.

The doctor who informed me about these and many other cases does not believe them at all exceptional and is emphatic in declaring that "not 50 per cent of boys realize at first the sinfulness of actions of self-abuse." The lesson for priests and parents is obvious. Even with young children the advice should be specific about safeguards. A man relates that he remembers from the catechism class how the priest instructed the children to have their hands crossed on their breast when falling asleep. At the time he did not surmise the reason, but now realizes what a safeguard the advice represented for preventing the handling of the sex organs.

The hopeful thing about instruction is that a plain word may be effective with young children. There is no habit of long standing to contend with, and a plain word on the part of parents or the priest will fall upon good soil and may be sufficient for stopping the practice.

The chief thought that should encourage both parents and priests in their efforts of reform is that we have at our command what is undoubtedly the strongest and most effective remedy—religion. Dr. James J. Walsh admits that religion is the most effective remedy of all:

> I do not know that I have ever seen a case where religious motives were not the most important element in the cure, but this may be due to the conditions in which I have been placed. I have seen a number of these cases in men and women because clergymen have sent them to me in order that they might be helped in the work of reform, and while there are many re-

> lapses and some had apparently given up the effort in despair of their power to overcome themselves, nine out of every ten of those who have seriously faced the problem have succeeded in overcoming themselves, and as a rule have a better knowledge of their own characters and more respect for themselves. They are better men in every way than if their improvement had come about through selfish fear of physical consequences.[20]

Some priests expect good results from advising their penitents who may be exposed to special dangers to take a temporary vow of chastity, say, in the beginning, for a week, later for a month, and then for three months, and so forth. They argue that a boy or girl leading a chaste life should receive the added merit of the vow. The thought of the vow will be a protection to some, though, on the other hand, the confessor must be prudent about advising the vow generally. Timid people might find the thought of the vow an occasion for anxiety.

What will be said on pp. 362 ff. on the potency of the religious helps for the training in chastity is especially pertinent with regard to breaking up the habit of self-abuse. We should like to add to what will be said there by assembling here a few important points garnered from the replies to our questionnaire and from the extensive literature on the subject.

A priest contributes these helpful notes:

> The confessor should not hesitate to ask questions in case of need. A penitent may confess actions as "thoughts" of impurity, and do this in good faith. Or also in good faith he may not mention the matter at all, and discover the truth years later when he will ask

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[20] Quoted by Medicus, *Medical Essays,* Milwaukee, 1928, pp. 206-207.

to have things straightened out. Thus, unfortunately, the confessor has no opportunity of preventing the formation of the habit; in fact, the habit may be strongly established by the years of sin. In case there is no improvement, it might be well at times to question the penitent whether he is not indulging in incompleted acts, i.e., ceasing before the effect occurs. The penitent is perhaps not aware of the seriousness of thus playing with fire, and may consequently be keeping continually on the brink of mortal sin.

An important remedy is immediate Confession. If Confession is delayed, a second and a third fall may be the result: "I've fallen, why not twice? I'm in mortal sin anyway; it's just as easy to confess two sins." Hence there is need of urging immediate Confession, and opportunity should be given, as far as possible, for immediate Confession. At all events, our people should be taught the practice of making an act of Perfect Contrition immediately after having sinned. Much more should be done to make known among our people the splendid pamphlet on this subject written by the Rev. J. Von den Driesch with a preface by the Rev. A. Lehmkuhl, S.J.

Some do not find contrition at all difficult after a fall, even though they fall frequently. As soon as the pleasure has been obtained, they feel disgusted with themselves, are sorry, and ready for Confession. Others however, though disgusted with themselves, must first recover from the shock before they will make an act of contrition. This may require a day or two. Their reaction after a fall may be one of despair—they are so dejected that they don't "give a rap" what happens and consequently may sin repeatedly in quick succession.

All informants and all writers are of one mind that kindness and not harshness will win the day. The fact that the penitent has come to the confessor speaks volumes in his favor, and the priest should be careful lest any harsh word of his might break the bruised reed.[21] The effect of the habit in general is to depress and discourage the sinner, and it is the duty of the confessor to raise the drooping spirits of the penitent and to convince him that if he really wants to, he can win the victory. For they can conquer who believe they can. The old motives of fear, and especially fear of physical consequences, were quite unworthy, and, insofar as they had any effect, produced a deterioration of character rather than a strengthening of the spirit. The penitent must feel that if he is a man, he can and will overcome the habit.

In teaching his penitent to have trust in ultimate victory through the power of grace and will power, the priest is standing on solid dogmatic ground.* The confessor may confidently tell his penitent that he will be cured provided he continues to fight bravely. That is the teaching of the Council of Trent in quoting the text of St. Paul: "God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able; but will make also with temptation issue that you may be able to bear it."[22] We reach the same conclusion from the promise of Our Lord that prayer will be heard infallibly. The conviction of ultimate victory will give new courage for the fight.

While it is not good pedagogy when instructing young children to tell them of the wide prevalence of the sin, because of their tendency to follow the crowd, yet in the case of the victim of the sin it will be necessary to get out of his head the notion that he is a sort of hideous freak, who should be instantly disgraced were his trouble known. The priest should tell him that his case is not exceptional, that there are many who share his misery, that there are countless numbers who have risen from sins much worse than his, and that therefore even his frequent relapses should not discourage him. It will put new heart into the young man struggling against heavy odds when he learns that his problems are not new, not insignificant, and that many another man has met and solved them in such a way as to make life more full of real happiness. It is such sympathetic helpfulness on the part of the confessor that has wrought miracles of grace. We may recall the case of St. Philip Neri who cured a victim of sin by inviting him to return to him after every fall, and who received him almost daily and was never harsh with him, but always buoyed up his courage until the victory was finally won.

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[21] Matt. XII, 20.

* Cf. *supra*, p. 209.

[22] I Cor. X, 13.

The Rev. Mr. Seeley reports the case of a youth who had made a terrible but losing fight against temptation.[23] When the evil impulse came upon him he would say to himself: "I will not do it. I will not do it." He would clench his fists till the nails sank into the flesh. But all in vain. He was finally told that if he would spend one-tenth of the energy he put forth to resist evil, in clinging to the good, he would conquer. A year later the man who had given him this advice met the youth. It was scarcely necessary to ask him how the fight went with him, for there was victory in his look. He said that he had not yielded once since their interview of a year before.

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[23] *Christian Social Hygiene*, Portland, Oregon, 1919, pp. 72-73.

STRENGHTENING THE WILL

Here again there is unanimity of opinion: strengthening of the will is a most important factor both in preventing and in stopping the habit of the solitary sin. All other aids will prove unavailing without a strong, resolute will.* It is the weakness of the will that is chiefly responsible for most relapses into this sin. In these latter days, with our soft pedagogy, it will be necessary to make special efforts to strengthen the will, as there is evidence universally of a weakening of will-power, and many young people do not think themselves capable of the energy that is required for the victory. Therefore they must be told that if only they are firm enough they can break even the worst habit. They must apply in the moral sphere the truth of the familiar proverb: "A winner never quits, and a quitter never wins." A doctor reports that he has been surprised over and over again at the ease with which his patients were able to avoid the practice for weeks, once they had made up their minds in the matter.

In order to direct his penitents aright, the priest should be familiar with the psychology of will-power. He will find *The Training of the Will* by Father Lindworsky, S.J., translated by Arped Steiner and Edward A. Fitspatrick,[24] a helpful book for the study of the subject. It is largely a question of indirect control. The exercises of the will should begin first in other spheres. The will-power thus receives an all-round strengthening, and thus self-confidence is gained. It will then be found possible to gain the victory over long-established habits. Professor

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* Cf. *infra*, pp. 477 ff.

[24] Milwaukee, 1929.

Foerster recommends such exercises as the following: keeping things tidy, refraining from talking, doing disagreeable things, carefully speaking the truth, doing some drudgery, studying a new language with full energy. This procedure will regenerate the will-power more effectively than would a direct effort in the direction of the greatest weakness, for here the tradition of failure has become too powerful. Cardinal Newman's sermon on *Self-Denial the Test of Religious Earnestness*[25] brings out the natural and supernatural aspects of such will training.

Will training of this kind will arouse the potential interests and enthusiasms that are wrapped up within the sinner even when he is at his worst. A physician tells of a person who had fallen into self-abuse, and, despite earnest efforts, had not succeeded in giving up the habit. One day at a sanatorium this person saw people engaged in handicraft, and became so interested in this form of work that he took it up with enthusiasm. The bad habit vanished. There had been awakened a strong natural interest that inhibited the old vice; an evil had been cured through the coming in of more life.

It has been observed that the solitary sin is the refuge of the shy, the lonely, the despondent. Hence it behooves the confessor or others interested in the victim of sin to train him that he should never yield to moods. If the victim of sin catches himself sulking, fidgety, crotchety, childish, he must learn to pull up quickly. There is no doubt that to resist moods, and to do the opposite of what they suggest, is a very healthy form of self-conquest and hurts no one.

It is not advisable to allow much privacy to children. It is a good rule for boys' camps that the youngsters have not too much privacy during the summer. Many educators and physicians condemn private bedrooms or cubicles in boys' schools. Moods of adults sometimes call for privacy, but privacy may be dangerous for children. They should not be left entirely to their own devices, as they may fall into dangerous play. *Mare etiam cum dormit, mare est*—The sea even when asleep, remains the sea. It is the calm of the sea that forebodes the storm. It is when children are most quiet that they are exposed most to danger. Some writers believe that the habit of self-abuse is often due to the lack of congenial companionship. Hence the duty of providing wholesome and congenial companionship for the young.

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[25] *Parochial and Plain Sermons,* Vol. I.

There is one insidious danger that the priest must guard against. While it is comparatively easy to break the habit once the mind is made up, there may come the feeling that now it must be absolutely facile to keep away from the sin. This is, however, never true. Relapses are frequently easy. If the penitent allows himself to read vicious books, or suggestive literature of any kind, or permits himself an indulgence in the reading of long accounts of a sex murder trial, or goes to see a sex play or a vile movie with its suggestions, or exposes himself to sexually exciting conditions of any kind, he will be almost sure of relapsing into the old habit. Hence the need for the confessor to find out what was the occasion of the sin in the first place, and to demand that the penitent include in his resolution to avoid the sin, the firm resolve to shun also the occasion thereof.

A Catholic doctor reports as follows with regard to the frequency of the sin: "A weekly offense is about the average for the common cases; in others there seems to be a sort of maddening desire for it about bi-weekly or even monthly, with no danger in between. Some cases of daily masturbation have been cured with one interview; a very strong will power has been evident in these cases—that carried the victim through the period of nervous impulse to repeat the act."

Relapses are, in the beginning at least, almost inevitable. But it is easier to break the habit the second time than it was at first, and it becomes increasingly easy if the penitent keeps up the effort of regulating his life so as to avoid the occasion of the sin. Relapses are quite as sure to occur as with regard to alcoholism if occasions for the taking of liquor are not sedulously avoided.

Priests should not fail to make full use of the opportunity offered them in the confessional for encouraging and directing their penitents. The Sacrament offers opportunity for more than only the absolution. The remission of sins is, of course, the chief fruit of the Sacrament but is not the only fruit. The confessional offers opportunity for individual direction and especially encouragement. The victim of this dreadful habit always seems to need a confidant—someone to whom he can go for help and who assures him of the ability that he can overcome himself if he only makes a strong enough effort. Therefore the confessor should listen not only to the story of his penitent's relapse, but should also note very carefully any improvement or any victory gained. It is the propect of this weekly report to his confessor that will sustain many a young man while he is fighting alone the grim battle. If a boy is weak in this regard, he frequently finds that the mere telling of the temptation to his spiritual director is sufficient to remove the temptation, at least for some time. The manifesting of one's temptations is in general a strong antidote against sin.

By keeping in close touch with his confessor, the boy will be trained to fight what may be the biggest fight ever waged by man—a fight in secret, without applause. The fight will appeal to the boy when his confessor reminds him that while Christ said "Learn of Me because I am meek,"[26] He could also have said: "Learn of Me because I am a good fighter." Another type of boy, the strong, self-respecting type of person, will take himself in hand and overcome the habit if he is told that the solitary sin should be stopped because it is a selfish, stupid vice, calling for neither intelligence nor character.

Conditions Requiring Medical Advice

Some priests report that in certain cases they believe it helpful to have the penitent consult a physician. But the priest must be cautious as to the physician whom the penitent will consult in the matter. He must make certain that the penitent will consult only such physicians as may be trusted to give proper advice. In a survey of 1,000 married women it was found that 370 of them had received information from physicians as to contraceptive measures.[27]

The physician can do much, particularly at the beginning, to help in breaking the habit. Dr. James J. Walsh advises that bromides taken to the extent of a dram or more a day are almost a specific for superirritability of the nervous system, and if taken two or three weeks the patient will usually have little or no difficulty in overcoming the habit. However, this medical writer admits that bromides are not of much avail after this time unless the patient's character has been aroused to determined helpfulness in the matter.

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[26] Matt. XI, 29.

[27] K. B. Davis, *Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-Two Hundred Women*, New York, 1929, p. 18.

The priest should be familiar with the means recommended by the authorities on mental hygiene and physical health as these may assist the penitent in the fight against the sinful habit. However, we do not believe that the confessor should himself ever advise his penitent to take any of the medicines recommended by Dr. Antonelli[28] or by Father Thomas Gerster, O.M.Cap.[29] The priest may, however, let the physician know what these authors recommend in this direction, and also what surgical operations they advise for certain cases. It would also be well to have a physician examine those penitents who are afflicted with what Dr. Antonelli calls an erotic temperament, and who are driven by a physical and almost irresistible urge to indulge in masturbation.

Masturbation during sleep would seem to indicate the obstinate force of the habit: even though self-abuse may have been committed only seldom, or in very early childhood, the habit may persist in sleep even after maturity. It seems at times that the more conscious is the effort to put an end to the embarrassing situation, the more surely and the more frequently the act is committed, even by those whose conscious life has been chaste for many years. Such cases may call for medical attention.

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[28] *Medicina pastoralis,* Vol. II, Rome, 1909, p. 214.

[29] *Munus confessarii quoad castitatem poenitentis promovendam,* Innsbruck, 1927, pp. 107-109.

The priest will do well in this connection to study the *Theologia Moralis Pathologica* by Father Francis A. Barbens, O.M.Cap.[30] The book treats what still remains a new subdivision of Moral Theology. The author defines it as the science of those human acts that proceed from nature weakened by disease, and consequently entail either no responsibility at all or a lessened degree of culpability. The principal object of this discipline is not to ascertain the causes which destroy or diminish responsibility, but as far as possible to provide prophylactic or curative treatment for them. It is a useful manual for confessors, spiritual directors, and teachers of moral theology because of the great amount of practical information compressed within its 317 pages. It has been said that physicians often trespass upon the domain of the confessor, but the latter must be just as careful lest he trespass upon the field of the medical man. Still, it will be mutually helpful for the physician and the priest to have conferences on the subject as one will learn from the other.

A virtue that the confessor must practice at times to an heroic degree in dealing with this class of penitents is patience. But he will bear with them in all patience when he recalls from St. Augustine's *Confessions*[31] what an effort is required to shake off the sleep of sin, and his patience and the grace of God will in the end bring victory. Those who must consider the problem of the solitary sin in boarding schools, may get some help from Dr. Hime's *School-*

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[30] Barcelona, 1917.

[31] Book VIII; in Pusey's translation, pp. 205-206.

boys' Special Immorality,[32] or Arnold's *Impurity in Schools and How to Deal with It*,[33] and especially from Father Krus' *Wie kann die Anstaltserziehung zur Sittenreinheit heranbilden?*[34]

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[32] London, 1901.
[33] Cooperstown, N. Y., 1907.
[34] Innsbruck, 1911.

CHAPTER XIII

ADOLESCENCE AND THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN THE SEXES

The Rev. Dr. Paul H. Furfey shows, in his valuable study *The Gang Age*,[1] that the period of preadolescence in the most typical cases of boys begins between the eighth and eleventh birthday and ends at puberty. The average age for the beginning of puberty among boys is about fourteen and one-half years. With girls the period of preadolescence ends somewhat earlier, i.e., at about twelve. During the period of preadolescence the two sexes draw instinctively apart. Their interest in each other diminishes. Boys take delight in sports which girls think "horrid," and girls devote themselves to games and occupations which boys consider beneath their dignity.

This drawing apart of the sexes is partly due to the fact that the advent of puberty, with the accelerated rate of growth by which it is accompanied, does not come at exactly the same age in the two sexes. There can be no doubt that this temporary loss of interest in each other is a valuable safeguard and preservative of the normal relations of the sexes. It is one of nature's provisions for the welfare of society. Premature sexual relations mean stunted growth, dwarfed intellects, and shortened lives. It is an unfailing mark of the higher civilizations that infancy, childhood, and innocent youth are prolonged as much as possible, or at least until the individual has become quite fit to enter without detriment upon the next succeeding stage of his life.[2]

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[1] New York, 1926, p. 14.

Preadolescence is the time of friendship for boys with boys, and for girls with girls. This phenomenon has not escaped the notice of that shrewd observer of human nature, Thackeray. "What generous boy," he writes, "in his time has not worshipped somebody? Before the female enslaver makes her appearance, every lad has a friend of friends, a crony of cronies, to whom he writes immense letters in vacation, whom he cherishes in his heart of hearts; whose sister he proposes to marry in after life; whose purse he shares; for whom he will take a thrashing if need be; who is his hero."

This is the period in life when there are more Orresteses and Pyladeses, more Damons and Pythiases than at any other age. Here is an opportunity for the understanding parent, or teacher, or mature friend. Older people will be wise if they will take a personal interest in the boy or girl particularly during this period. The boy who apparently is altogether beyond control is hungry for sympathy and confidence. He is tossed about by anxious questions of all kinds; his physical nature is in an uproar; there is storm and stress within and without. He is really at sea, and is eager for a word of real understanding.

One man acknowledged: "How eager was I for a certain priest to make the first advances. I felt that he could help me. I did not know what to do. But he ignored me. If only he had spoken to me alone, and had asked me what was at the bottom of my laziness and stubbornness. But I could not get myself to explain. One word from him would have loosed my tongue, and I might have been preserved from many a mistake that I made at the time.''

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[2] Cf. Frederick Tracy, *The Psychology of Adolescence*, New York, 1928, pp. 143-144.

How important for elders at this time to keep a watchful eye lest the boy or girl with the craving for friendship fall a victim to a vile companion or, what is worse, develop a ''crush'' for an older person who would abuse the confidence of the child and drag him into the mire of vice. Homosexual tendencies are liable to appear at this stage of development, and double vigilance is in order throughout the period.

THE ''OFF-YEAR''

The symptoms that we have described indicate what some psychologists call the ''off-year'' in the development of the young. With girls the period may last from two to nine months, but in the case of boys the transition lasts longer.[3] Both boys and girls during this period of transition often love to be alone, are destructive of things generally, are rebellious, and open to evil influences of all kinds. It is a time of change and readjustment. The young people no longer consider themselves children, yet are a bit awkward in aping the manners of adults. Hence the terms employed by the older generation when talking about ''the awkward age,'' or ''the silly age,'' or when calling the girl ''flapper,'' ''gawk,'' or ''*backfisch*''; or when designating the boy ''jackanapes,'' ''shaver,'' ''stripling,'' ''popinjay,'' ''moon-calf,'' ''greenhorn,'' or, as in the southern part of the United States, ''jelly bean.''

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[3] Charlotte Bühler, ''Vergleich der Pubertätsentwicklung bei Knaben und Mädchen,'' Stern (editor) in: *Die Erziehung und die sexuelle Frage*, Berlin, 1927, pp. 156-161

But the more serious aspect of the period is brought out when we speak of ''the time of storm and stress.'' The angels of heaven and the devils of hell wage a fierce war for the possession of the soul during this all-important time. Defeat or victory may eventually mean heaven or hell for the soul. Alas, that the enemy gains the victory so often! The scandals in some public high schools are a sad story. But in our own high schools devoted Brothers and Sisters often fight a losing battle, and the moral lapses, mixed marriages, and apostasies among the graduates of Catholic secondary schools raise the heart-searching question: Have we done all in our power for the boys and girls during the most critical period of their lives? The years between fourteen and sixteen are the most dangerous in a boy's life; Goring found that two-fifths of a group of repeaters were first convicted between the ages of fifteen and twenty. Every step of the upward path is strewn with wreckage of body, mind, and morals. These complaints about the moral hazards of adolescence are not new. The aged shepherd in *The Winter's Tale* laments: ''I would there were no age between ten and three-and-twenty, or that youth would sleep out the rest; for there is nothing in the between but immorality, wronging the ancientry, stealing, fighting.''

But at the other extreme Starbuck found that deeply religious people could most frequently trace the beginning of their devout lives back to adolescence. Statistics could readily be produced to prove that no age is so responsive to all the best and wisest adult endeavor. In no psychic soil. too. does seed bad as well as good, strike such deep root, grow so rankly, or bear fruit so quickly or so surely. Adolescence is the second birth of the child and the morning hour of life when the whole world turns either to dross or to gold in accordance with what influences are predominating in the life of the boy or girl.

No phase of character training is more interesting or more important than the education of the adolescent. Adolescence has always appealed to the heart of the true teacher. At least one biographer of Our Lord is of the opinion that many, if not most, of the disciples chosen by Christ were adolescents. Socrates knew that there was no more fertile source for inspiration than the companionship of adolescents. Plato is at his best in those dialogues in which adolescents play the chief rôle. G. Stanley Hall confesses of himself: "As for years an almost passionate lover of childhood and a teacher of youth, the adolescent stage of life has long seemed to me one of the most fascinating of all themes, more worthy, perhaps, than anything else in the world of reverence, most inviting study, and in most crying need of a service we do not yet understand how to render aright."

Manhood and Liberty

The outstanding feature of adolescence is the consciousness of incipient manhood and womanhood. He who is wise will not smile—at least not in the presence of the young hopeful—at the awkwardness with which the youngster assumes the rôle of a man. He will instead act upon the principle: "If you would do something for the average man, you must begin before he is a man." He will therefore not hold in contempt the aspirations of the would-be man, but will be sympathetic with the viewpoint of the adolescent.

The adolescent feels that his childhood days are past. He feels he has the rights and privileges of the adult, and resents being treated as a child. He worships the parent or teacher who recognizes his manhood. He approves heartily of the principle that baby-methods must give way to man-methods. Feeling himself a man, the adolescent is bent on asserting his manhood. He is, according to the expressive phrase of Vives, like an unbroken horse that would get rid of both rider and bridle. His idol is personal liberty. But he has an erroneous conception of liberty. What he craves is license; but it would be disastrous to indulge his wishes:

Give a boy an inch and he'll take an ell;
Give him a horse and he'll ride him to hell.

There should be composed a new couplet to replace this ancient one in order to describe what harm is done to body and soul—but chiefly to soul—by allowing the modern adolescent the unrestricted use of the automobile.

One of the chief duties of the parent or teacher of adolescents is to bring home to his charges the idea of true liberty. The adolescent must learn that liberty consists in freeing ourselves from the tyranny of our passions and the influence of bad environment and evil companions. We may well quote to the adolescent boy the lines from Shakespeare:

Brave conquerors—for so you are
That war against your own affections
And the huge army of the world's desires.

The adolescent must learn to appreciate the liberty of the children of God. Hence he must be taught to stand on his own two feet, to recognize no authority except that of his own conscience and the representatives of God. He must be trained to brave the jeers of the crowd or the gang, to be *not only a man in the world but a man against the world.* Let him remember the story of the father and son and their mule. Do what they would, the people had something to criticize. True respect comes only to those who stand on their own two feet heedless of the jibes of the rabble. If the adolescent is afraid to act on principle, if he must always do as the rest do, he may as well wear a button with the text, "Smith and Company," for he is not an individual, but merely a member of a gang. No matter how lowly the duty, let him perform it proudly. When carrying a basket for his mother or sister, he should carry it proudly because it is an honor to do one's duty well. If we make our young people think right about liberty, we shall make it hard for them to do wrong.

Still, it is not enough to make the young people think right. They must be given an opportunity to *do* right, i.e., to submit to legitimate authority. Parents and teachers will find that they need but assert their authority in the proper way to obtain cheerful obedience from all who have gotten right ideas about authority and liberty. There is much lamenting about the lack of obedience in American homes and schools. There is, however, just as much obedience as ever in America, only now the parents and teachers obey the children. Too many parents and teachers coquet with the likes and dislikes of the young people, and naturally they cannot teach duty or the spirit of obedience. Where there is energy to command well enough, obedience never fails. There are a thousand books on the duty of obedience, but very few that teach the fine art of how to enjoin the obedience properly. Let the elders appeal to the manhood of the adolescent, his sense of duty and honor; let them demand obedience in no uncertain terms; let them make it plain that they will insist on submission; and the youth will comply with their every demand. For instance, with regard to going out, parents can still habituate their children never to leave home without informing either father or mother where they are going. Firm insistence upon control when the child is growing up will develop in him the attitude that if he is ashamed to admit going to a place, his only way out of the difficulty will be not to go. Let the parents' first lesson be obedience, and the second may be whatever they will.

The personality of parents and teachers plays an important rôle in this respect. The adolescent boy and girl are hero worshipers and are hungry for ideals. If their parents and teachers represent their ideal of what their elders ought to be, they will respond to the efforts made by those in authority. But it is these elders who must themselves have confidence in their own will power if they would hope to control the wills of the young people. They must realize that the will is our highest and most perfect faculty; the best thing we have, our royal faculty, and the most effective weapon that we wield. If those who are placed in authority have confidence in the untold possibilities of the will, they may hope to arouse in the young people a deep interest in the training of the will. Father John Lindworsky's *The*

Training of the Will[4] will furnish helpful material in this direction.

Once the young people are interested in will training, there is hope. If you would make a permanent magnet, you must use toughened steel; soft iron will not answer your purpose. Outside applied force will not toughen the will. It must be toughened from the inside. The very obstacles should prove advantages. The block of granite may be an obstacle in the pathway of the weak, but it is a stepping stone in the pathway of the strong. To make our young people fight for the good is the only proper preparation for successful living, for to live is to fight: "The life of man upon earth is a warfare."[5] After having gained some victories over themselves, the young people will begin to realize that it is true of them individually that they are masters of their fate and captains of their soul. They will grasp the truth that they can do what they want to do. They will experience a new joy in the exercise of their will power just as they realize the bitter sense of defeat whenever they yield to their lower nature. They should engrave upon their minds the words that a business man had engraved on a card to be hung over his desk:

If you really will
You surely can—
But you never can
Unless you will.

The joy of victory will be an incentive to the young people to scale still higher heights. With a will strengthened and toughened by the battles of their adolescence period, the boys will be ready for the fray of the great world, where the rush and excitement and distraction wear out all who are not endowed with a will of steel. With such a training they are, indeed, prepared for the battle of life. We do not know what life will have in store for them. It may destroy their health, and blast their hopes; but it cannot change their will if that is firmly grounded on faith and principle.

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[4] Translated by Steiner and Fitzpatrick, Milwaukee, 1929.
[5] Job VII. 1.

But to obtain these splendid results, we must give our young people opportunity for developing self-reliance and self-control. The government which is felt least is the best government. The teacher whose rule is least recognized because of the self-control of his pupils is the greatest disciplinarian. The teacher who soonest becomes unnecessary in the ordering of the pupils' work is the most successful teacher. The highest ideal of the teacher is to become useless. Consequently, it remains one of the most important duties of the teacher to assist his pupils in developing self-reliance and self-control.

Writing to the mother of a boy, Cardinal Newman gave some pertinent advice on this head:

> We must take care of the young, one by one, as a mother does and as an Archbishop does not. . . . Youth is the time of generous and enthusiastic impulses; young men are imprudent and get into scrapes. Perhaps they fall in love imprudently. To carry out an engagement on which they have set their hearts may seem to their parents a madness; most truly, yet it may be a greater madness to prohibit it. All of us must recollect instances when to suffer what is bad in itself is the lesser of great evils, as the event has shown. When there has been a successful prohibition it has resulted in a lifelong ruin

> to the person who is dear to us, for whose welfare we have been mistakenly zealous. It does not do to beat the life out of a youth—the life of aspirations, excitement, and enthusiasm. Older men live by reason, habit and self-control, but the young live by visions.

It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after your own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of his conscience. With this truth deeply impressed upon our young people, we may hope that the adolescents will adopt for their lives the rule that Emerson selected as the one that might serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness: "What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think." After all has been said, we discover that we have not gotten beyond the three demands of the old pedagogy: (1) learn to obey; (2) learn to abstain; (3) learn to conquer thyself.

The Inter-Sex Attraction

After this brief survey of the general factors in the education of the adolescent, we must inquire into what is admittedly one of the most difficult phases of adolescence: the association of the sexes. It is with the beginning of adolescence that the child discovers the other sex, and passes through the fire and water of temptation.

G. Stanley Hall quotes Ludwig, the leading physiologist of his time, to the effect that for some years about nine-tenths of the psychic processes of adolescents center in sex and its functions, sex being here understood in a broad interpretation.[6] Aristotle may be said to agree with this view for in his *Rhetoric*,[7] where he has given us the best ancient characterization of adolescence, he says: "Of bodily desires it is the sexual to which youth are most disposed to give way, and in regard to sexual desire they exercise no self-restraint." Nor should this prominence of the sex element surprise us, for it is the awakening of sex life that marks the beginning of adolescence.

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[6] *Adolescence*, Vol. II, New York, 1904, p. 97.

This is not saying that prior to this time there may not be some playing at love between the two sexes. We have records of the affair between Byron in his ninth year and Mary Duff, between Goethe in his eleventh year and the sister of his friend Derones. Ganghofer has written a sketch of his first love affair with Elsie who was then five while he was six, and has brought out the tragic ending of the situation that made him a misogynist for a long time. But all these affairs may be described as abnormal or at least as exceptional, and rather prove the general law that prior to adolescence there is no trace of sex relationship between boys and girls. We need not here prove the untenableness of Freud's view concerning the sexual nature of all impulses of young and old.[8]

It is important to remember that the companionship or friendship of normal adolescent boys and girls lacks in the beginning all thought of the physical side of sex. Attraction for the other sex and craving for its companionship are among the deep-seated impulses of the normal adolescent. Each is to the other the complement, the "unsatisfied valence," and it is this factor that is subconsciously active in the first meetings of adolescent boys and girls. There is a vagueness and indefiniteness about the first approaches, and it may take long for the physical side of the sexual factor to become conscious at all, at least in the case of the girl. There is a vague longing after ideals, and the first approaches of both the boy and the girl are often no more than an expression of this searching for perfection.*

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[7] Welldon's translation, London, 1886, p. 164.

[8] Cf. T. V. Moore, O. S. B., *Dynamic Psychology*, Philadelphia, 1924, pp. 242ff.; Otto Tumlirz, *Die Reifejahre*, Part I, Leipzig, 1924, pp. 31ff.

Longfellow has beautifully expressed this phase of adolescence:

How beautiful is youth! how bright it gleams
With its illusions, aspirations, dreams!
Book of Beginnings, Story without End,
Each maid a heroine, and each man a friend!

The first consciousness of the inter-sex attraction may well produce a certain shyness and diffidence. In his classic novel of adolescence, *Seventeen*, Booth Tarkington brings out this feature of shyness. William Sylvanus Baxter was about to follow the adorable Lola Pratt: "He took two steps to follow her, but a suffocating shyness stopped him abruptly and, in a horror lest she should glance round and detect him in the act, he turned and strode fiercely away. When he looked, he affected great casualness in the action."

During the neutral period of early adolescence, the friendship between boys and girls may lack all elements of sexual love, and it is not necessary for parents or teachers to regard invariably as a crime the meetings between boys and girls, or even their corresponding by letter. A public or quasi-criminal investigation into the matter may do more harm than good. To comment privately on the matter, or at times even to ignore the incident entirely may prove more helpful.

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* Cf. *infra*, pp. 416 ff.

The Problem of Co-Education

However, there is in this policy no recommendation of co-education for the period of adolescence. There are factors not only of morality and of character education, but also of the entirely different educational needs of girls and boys at this age that demand this conclusion. All arguments in this connection have been worn threadbare, and at the end neither biologists nor psychologists appear to have anything to say that is so terse, so expressive, and so fundamentally true as Tennyson's oft-quoted line, "For woman is not undeveloped man, but diverse." And diverse, in spite of 'ologies and 'isms, she will undubitably remain.

The ideal of segregating the sexes in our schools, especially during the period of adolescence, is brought out by Pope Pius XI in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth.*[9] The Pope declares that co-education "by many of its supporters is founded upon naturalism and the denial of original sin; but by all, upon a deplorable confusion of ideas that mistakes a leveling promiscuity and equality for the legitimate association of the sexes. The Creator has ordained and disposed perfect union of the sexes only in matrimony, and, with varying degrees of contact, in the family and in society." Besides, the Encyclical goes on to say, there is not in nature itself, which fashions the two sexes quite differently in organism, in temperament, in abilities, anything to suggest that there can be or ought to be promiscuity and, much less, equality in the training of the two sexes. The Creator has destined the two sexes to complement each other in the family and in society precisely because of their differences. Consequently, these differences ought to be maintained and encouraged during the years of formation, which means that there must be necessary distinction and corresponding separation, according to age and circumstances. The Pope concludes: "These principles, with due regard to time and place, must, in accordance with Christian prudence, be applied to all schools, particularly in *the most delicate and decisive period of formation, namely, of adolescence.*[10]

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[9] Pp. 23-24.

Wise men have never closed their eyes to the dangers of co-education during the period of adolescence. The late Rev. Dr. Thomas E. Shields pleaded strongly against the practice in his book, *The Education of Our Girls*,[11] and the Rev. Peter J. Bernarding presented strong arguments in favor of segregation in his treatise, "Objectionable Features of Co-Education in the High School."[12] These writers contend that with co-education in the high school and college there is danger lest the boys be femininized and the girls be masculinized. The familiarity begotten by co-education is not conducive to the attitudes that should obtain between the sexes during the critical period of adolescence.

However, the argument has been advanced that our young people should have habitual contact with reality, and that boys in particular should not develop unhealthy ideas and ideals about girls by remaining separated from them. The contention is that the boy is liable to over-idealize girls and women if he is kept in ignorance of them, and that a happy marriage will be impossible or at least very difficult in consequence.[13]

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[10] Italics ours.

[11] New York, 1907.

[12] *Bulletin of the Catholic Educational Association*, Nov., 1924.

But we believe that with present-day conditions the danger is just in the opposite direction: the sexes are thrown into too intimate companionship to beget the attitude of mutual respect that is essential particularly during the period of adolescence. It is for that period especially that we must remember the axiom: No man ever looked upon a woman as his equal; he looks either up to her or down upon her. Our present age wherein the sexes are thrown together in such intimate contact, is not remarkable for happy marriages, but is prolific of divorces; and we still believe that the attitude of the boy who regards every girl as he would have his mother or sister regarded by other boys is the most wholesome. The Catholic boy has a still higher attitude in that he should see in every girl and woman a sister of the Mother of God.

Are Girls the Aggressive Factor To-day?

But the objection will occur spontaneously that the girls of to-day are such as boys cannot look up to. We note from the returns to our questionnaire that many priests have serious misgivings whether at the present time the girls are not the aggressive factor. Many seem to believe that girls rather than boys are the chief factors in the modern deterioration of morals. One priest writes: "The virtue that withstands the assaults of this age must be stalwart—and, thanks be to God, there is magnificent virtue on every hand. Many of the girls, however, seem to have gone mad. Most of the poor fellows who are fighting temptation have a harder time on vacations in the home town than they have at school."

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[13] Leta S. Hollingworth, *The Psychology of the Adolescent*, New York, 1928, pp. 118-119.

It is undoubtedly true that many girls are to-day much less reserved than formerly, and that they display their physical charms in a way that would have indicated direct tempting twenty years ago. Dr. Woolston notes practices that are common in public to-day that formerly were forbidden by police regulation to prostitutes.[14] One writer, however, offers the explanation that the modern girl is obeying her intuition and is merely meeting the demand. She is acting in this unrestrained way because she believes that is what the modern boy expects of her.[15]

We believe that the vast majority of girls are probably not realizing the seriousness of what they are doing when they throw off all restraint. We cannot believe that at heart they are as bad as statistics and superficial observers make them out to be. Still, there can be no doubt that the temptations offered to-day by both boys and girls are most grave. No one will deny that both boys and girls are strong tempters to-day.

While we may question seriously whether girls are worse than boys in tempting to sin, there is universal agreement that the period of adolescence is always more trying for the girl than for the boy. Medical authorities maintain that the physical changes affect a girl's whole being to a far greater extent than they affect a boy; her physique feels the strain and she is apt to become run down. Hence the frequency of anemia and of tuberculosis among girls from fifteen to nineteen. All the more reason therefore why girls should get plenty of sleep, plenty of fresh air, and plenty of wholesome food. Excess of social activities making for late hours should therefore be avoided scrupulously, if only because of health.

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[14] *Prostitution in the United States*, New York, 1921, p. 336.

[15] Joseph Schröteler, S. J., "Die Revolution der modernen Jugend," in: *Stimmen der Zeit*, Oct. 1928, p. 8.

If we remember the bearing that health has upon the training in chastity, we shall have the chief reason for insisting on these requirements. Girls are exposed more than boys for another reason. While girls pretend to be sophisticated, they may still be densely ignorant about dangers confronting them when they are unrestrained.[16] It is not unusual to meet parents who like to have their boys instructed about the mysteries of life, but who feel that it would be startling and unnecessary for their daughters to learn the facts. In the meantime the girl may be exposing herself to most insidious dangers for body and soul.

Again, as girls are more emotional than boys, they would seem to be in more urgent need of developing a strong will power to bring their emotional nature under control. It is only by training the will that a real education of the emotional life can be accomplished. Regular exercises in the controlling of bodily conditions and outward distractions prepare the way for a mastery of the emotions and for their noblest development. The girl is thus trained to become independent of external circumstances, of whims and moods, and to acquire concentration, force, and endurance. Such will training protects a woman from the dangers that arise from her impulsiveness and suggestibility.

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[16] Cf. Lucian Johnston, "Innocence or Sophistication," in: *Truth*, June, 1928.

Is It Harmless Friendship?

The Davis study would seem to indicate that "crushes" are a grave problem in girls' schools. Father Vermeersch, S.J., remarks in his book, *De Castitate*,* that the infatuations that are common in both boys' and girls' schools may prove serious problems for the educator. Hence he thought it advisable to indicate briefly how teachers might be able to distinguish what he calls *amor*, or love, from *amicitia*, i.e., honorable friendship.

Love implies, he says, the mutual possession of two persons so that the two become through the bond of affection but one. Hence love excludes others and is often associated with jealousy. It is jealous and narrow in its demands for faithful attachment. However, love of this description is only a form of selfishness inasmuch as the lover in being kind to his beloved, is really only loving himself. Hence love has been called *un égoïsme à deux*—egoism for two.

Friendship, on the other hand, is not so exclusive, but allows others, though few and select, to enter the sacred circle. It, too, demands loyalty, but not jealously or narrowly. It is pure in affection and more free from selfish motives.

Since sexual love, properly speaking, can exist only between persons of the same sex, the homosexual tendency is prone to seek persons of different dispositions rather than those of the same make-up. Again, love will make much of physical factors, while they are not a necessary element in friendship, nor would they of themselves be sufficient for establishing the bond of friendship. Friendship grows gradually from a consideration of the moral qualities discovered in the people we like; while love is often something that is born on first sight, and may take hold of a person by storm and without reflection.

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* Rome, 1919, p. 30.

While friendship pursues the even tenor of her ways, love is solicitous and anxious. It demands frequent protestations of affection and loyalty. It is given to suspicion, leads to frequent quarrels, and to as frequent reconciliations: *Lites amantium amoris redintegratio*—the quarrels of lovers are a redintegration of love. Love delights in gazing upon, in caressing, embracing, and kissing the person beloved. It is fond of secrecy, of whispered words, and mysterious symbols. Friends may grossly neglect their personal correspondence, but lovers demand frequent *billets-doux*, or love notes, and are also given to the habit of writing everywhere the name of their beloved.

Father Vermeersch finally remarks that young people united by the bonds of honorable friendship are serene and undisturbed about their relationship, but that lovers who are infatuated with persons of the same sex, have generally some qualms of conscience about their attachment. They may try desperately to dispel these by such subtle rationalizing as may deceive themselves, and hence the confessor or their teachers may employ some of the points mentioned to get the young people to realize the serious nature of the situation.

Religious Factors That Appeal to Adolescents

In this matter as in all phases of the training in chastity, religion plays the most important rôle. Even William James stresses the importance of prayer for the period of adolescence, and G. Stanley Hall remarks that Catholic adolescents have a superior advantage in their devotion to Mary, the Immaculate Virgin. The religious truths, however, must be presented in a way to appeal to the adolescent. The Rev. Dr. John M. Cooper thinks it unwise to emphasize with boys of the gang age the passive side of Our Lord's personality and life. Had Christ come down from the cross and scattered His enemies, His triumph would have aroused greater enthusiasm and loyalty in the gang-age boy. At this age we should, therefore, stress the active, well-doing victorious Christ, reserving for middle adolescence (16 to 18) the treatment of the forbearing, forgiving Christ. In the case of the adolescent girl, we must bring out the beauty and purity of the Mother of God, her solicitude for her Child and for all men.

In dealing with adolescents, there is always danger of overemphasizing the weakness and helplessness of man and of throwing our young people exclusively on prayer and the Sacraments as if they did everything for us and relieved us of the need of personal efforts. What parents and teachers of adolescents need in their educational efforts is more reason and will, and less emotion and feeling—in a word, more head and less heart. It is to the prevalence of baby-methods in the character training of adolescents that we may, perhaps, trace some mixed marriages, apostasies, and moral lapses among the graduates of Catholic high schools and academies.

We may learn from the following prayer said daily by a boy of sixteen, what is nearest to the heart of the adolescent:

> O God, help me to be this day in every way a man; to govern my thoughts and actions according to the highest standards of unselfish manhood; to do nothing of which I should be ashamed to have those dear to me know; and ever to keep before my eyes the goal of a life of service and of fitness to serve.

Dr. Cooper's *Play Fair*[17] and Father Conroy's *Talks to Boys*[18] as well as Bishop Kelley's *Letters to Jack*[19] are well adapted to a boy's sense of religious values and should therefore be studied carefully by all who have charge of adolescents.

In her book, *Religious Instruction in the Catholic High School*,[20] Sister Mary Antonina, S.D.P., shows clearly what religious topics appeal to adolescents. She sent questionnaires to 4,000 high school pupils and found that of the topics listed under dogma, the preëminent choice of both boys and girls was the Life of Christ and the Passion, these topics standing first and second respectively, and far outstripping the other topics checked as appealing. This is what we should expect from the tendency of the adolescent to worship heroes instead of growing enthusiastic over truths or doctrines.

Further evidence of the adolescents' interest in the study of practical religion is exhibited by the data secured with regard to the moral topics. It will be interesting to compare the preferences of boys and girls with regard to the appeal of moral topics:

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[17] Washington, D. C., 1923. [18] New York, 1918.

[19] Chicago, 1917.

[20] Washington, D. C., 1930, pp. 126 ff.

Moral Topics	Per Cent Boys	Per Cent Girls
Fair play in sports	94	92
Instruction on purity	91	95
Instructions on justice and honesty	91	95
Danger points where many a soul has suffered shipwreck pointed out	91	92
How to meet temptations	91	93
Instructions on the Ten Commandments	90	90
Lessons on truthfulness and honor	90	96
How to build good habits	86	92
How to keep one's Faith	86	95
Instructions on our duties as Catholics	84	91
Religious problems of everyday life	83	90
How to choose one's friends	79	89
Hints on character training	79	87
Instructions on morals	78	83
Study of vocation	78	87
Spiritual works of mercy	77	82
Emphasis on sin	75	81
Instructions on the different states in life	75	84
Corporal works of mercy	75	84
Instructions on the right use of recreations	75	76
How to take care of one's health	75	75
Instructions on our duties as citizens	72	74
The Beatitudes	70	74
Catholic standards of friendship	69	85
Marriage and home-making	67	73
Instructions on mixed marriages	65	73
Study of the precepts of the Church	59	64
Emphasizing the evils of the day	59	63
Talks on how to work with others	55	69
Study of Catholic charities	52	68
Talks on temperance	51	48

Sister Antonina remarks in connection with her findings that the difference between boys' and girls' interests is more marked in the first two years of high school than in the last two years. She also notes that, as pupils advance, there is a perceptible increase in the general appeal of such topics as marriage, vocations, states of life, friendships, morals, character, health, etc., the difference at the various grade levels being greater between boys than between girls.

The inference from all these data is that adolescents prefer that which aids them in pursuing their ideals. This inference is substantiated by the data secured with regard to the appeal of the topics listed under the means of grace. The only item that has a remarkably low frequency is the Sacrament of Holy Orders—all others ranging from 71 to 94 per cent for the boys, and from 81 to 98 per cent for the girls. There is food for thought in the comparison of the percentages of boys and girls to whom the respective means of grace appeal:

MEANS OF GRACE

Topics	Per Cent Boys	Per Cent Girls
How to relieve the souls in purgatory	94	98
Instructions on the Mass	89	94
Study of the virtues of the Blessed Virgin	88	98
Instructions on the Sacraments	88	92
Instructions on the Sacrament of Penance	87	92
Instructions on the value of frequent Communion	87	94
How to pray	82	90
Instructions on grace	75	85
Instructions on Catholic devotions	74	84

Study of indulgences	71	81
Study of Holy Orders	53	42

The data secured by Sister Mary Antonina under the division of apologetics would seem to indicate that, even though the formal study of this subject possesses no great appeal, emphasis upon current objections to the Faith arouses interest among both boys and girls. Furthermore, this interest increases perceptibly in the last two years of high school. Among the items listed under Church History, we discover that only the "examples of the early martyrs," and "the missionary work of the Church" have a very noticeable appeal. This is in keeping with what we should expect of adolescents, who do not appreciate the value of tradition and who do not realize the need of consulting the past as a guide in shaping our conduct to-day.

Shall we hold priests and teachers responsible for the fact that the appeal of liturgy was found to be surprisingly low throughout the high school grades, ranging among the boys from 25 to 38 per cent and among the girls from 32 to 37 per cent? We are inclined to fix the blame upon the elders rather than upon the youngsters, because many pupils in the first and second years apparently failed to grasp the meaning of the word "liturgy," the query, "What is it?" appearing on many questionnaires.

Sister Mary Antonina's study fully bears out her contention that the responses to her questionnaire stress "how to live" rather than "what to know." Accordingly, the pupils designate spiritual aids as most beneficial, while the majority failed to declare dogma as being helpful. However, we believe that this latter fact does not indicate that the doctrinal truths do not appeal to adolescents but rather that, for most pupils, dogma as it is taught loses much of its significance. In fact, the reader cannot escape the impression created by the study that content and method are not distinct, but complementary elements in the educative process. Hence the importance of presenting religion to adolescents by proper methods. The data collected by Sister Antonina demonstrate that the weight of opinion is decidedly in favor of the use of practical example and of such methods generally as have a direct, personal appeal. From the standpoint of adolescents many things that are being done in religion classes might be omitted or relegated to the background and more time devoted to imparting functional knowledge.

Religion properly presented is not a mere abstraction, but is superior to all the attractions of sensuality in satisfying all the inner cravings of the whole man and woman, and in satisfying in particular the adolescent's hunger for the ideal.

The religious life of the adolescent is frequently beset with doubts, and exposed to all the dangers of moral laxity. The sense of sin may be in danger of utter extinction, and the feeling of reverence gone entirely. The adolescent is thinking independently and critically. He is no longer the child who took on blind faith whatever was said to him. He wants proof for what he is to believe. Hence the need of entering into his difficulties and of so directing his reading that books and magazines will answer the anxious questionings of his soul instead of raising new doubts.

In dealing with critical situations in the religious life of the adolescent the teacher and parent must make strenuous efforts by using both natural and supernatural means to save the boy or girl. But the natural must be interpenetrated with the supernatural. The supernatural is not a mere second story, but should be connected organically with the natural means. The Students' Mission Crusade, with its appeal to what Herbart calls the heroic emotions of the boy's nature, offers golden opportunities for bringing out latent religious enthusiasm. The same organization, with its local units, allows us to utilize to the best advantage all the instincts of the gang-age boy.

That our teachers have not availed themselves sufficiently of the opportunity presented by the Students' Mission Crusade and similar religious activities, was brought out in Sister Mary Antonina's study. In her questionnaire she listed retreats, parish activities, mission crusade work, and sodality meetings. The answers received from the pupils indicate that none of these activities has a relatively high appeal to boys, since they ranged from 37 to 67 per cent for the boys and from 67 to 82 per cent for the girls. The frequency of sodality meetings and mission activities was particularly low.

That the young are still open to the appeal of the ideal (if properly presented) may be seen from what happened recently at a meeting of Catholic boys and girls in Chicago. We are quoting the account as given by Father John La Farge, S.J.:

> Youth elected for boldness when over 1,000 students from thirty Catholic colleges and high schools in the Chicago district assembled at the Visitation High School on Friday, Nov. 1, for the meeting of Ciscora, the Chicago Catholic Student Conference on Religious Activities. . . . More than 50 delegates took the floor and

> told their assembled fellow-students how religious activities are carried on in their respective schools, and how they may be further developed through united efforts. The discussion centered around personal devotion to Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist, the Mass, Catholic literature, and Catholic action. With the exception of the two-minute speech of Father Meade, all the addresses and discussions were exclusively had by the students. The Chicago Catholic Student Conference was the forerunner of the nation-wide spiritual leadership movement.[21]

The same writer believes that whatever doubts Catholics may have had as to the value of the work of the Girl Scout Movement for our Catholic group seem now to have been entirely laid at rest. The wholesome courageous attitude towards life produced by the Girl Scout Movement, as well as its opportunities for leadership, appears to be a strong help in the development of spiritual leadership, and hence one cannot help feeling that Catholics should avail themselves more fully of its resources.

Some parents and teachers are disappointed at times if the adolescent—and this holds especially of the boy—is not demonstrative of his religious fervor. Most boys are loath to display their feelings on religion. They will discuss football, baseball, politics, the automobile, the radio, or camping, but if the talk turns on religion they retire within themselves, fortified by an adamant barrier of reserve. It may be that they are afraid of being laughed at or thought prudish, but it is an unjust conclusion to think that, because of his silence on the subject, the boy utterly ignores religion except when he goes to church, and that he has no personal feelings on the subject. One boy spoke for a large class of adolescents when he confessed:

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[21] *America*, Nov. 23, 1929, p. 163.

> Deep within himself a boy may have a strong and fine religious sense. He may be just as truly religious in his own way as the clergyman is in his, but he shrinks from the thought of exposing it. His religion is his, and his alone. He is unwilling to share or to display it, but he treasures it nevertheless. He merely lacks the outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace. To a boy all religious manifestation "goes against the grain."

Difference of the Sex Instinct in Man and Woman

While parents and teachers may thus be ignorant of the true religious self of the adolescent, the adolescents are ignorant of what is going on in the other half of the adolescent world. We are here referring to the fact that boys and girls are generally ignorant, with harmful results to both, of the essential difference of the sex instinct as found in man and woman. The common notion has it that the sex instinct is the same with all people, and that it differs only in intensity. Biologists and psychologists have done well in exposing this wrong notion and in distinguishing two factors in the sex urge: (1) the psychic factor—the craving of the soul for companionship, understanding and response; (2) the physical factor, which is inherent in the body and which craves the sensuous phase of sex.

It is important to remember that it is one of these two factors that predominates in each of the two sexes. It is in keeping with the function that man has in marriage that the physical factor should be developed most strongly in him, while the same factor lies dormant or latent in the majority of girls during their teens or early twenties and often for life.

Dr. Maurice A. Bigelow states the difference thus: "The sexual instincts of young men are characteristically active, aggressive, spontaneous, and automatic, while those of women *as a rule* are passive and subject to awakening by external stimuli, especially in connection with affection."[22] It is important that both the adolescent boy and girl should know of this difference in the two sexes. Briefly, it might be explained to them that love in the boy is chiefly physical, while in the girl it is chiefly psychic.

The average girl has no idea of the vehemence of the boy's passion. All that she is conscious of is her urge to love and to be loved in return. The confessor must bear this in mind when girls are apt to be at a loss to understand why he is so severe in forbidding her certain liberties with a boy which to her seem perfectly harmless. The girl is prone to think that the priest does not wish her to have any innocent pleasures, and she thinks herself misunderstood seriously. She believes that the boy has the same innocent intentions as herself, and she cannot understand what harm there could be in kissing and embracing. It is significant that Goethe has Margaret sing in his *Faust*:

> My heart is pining
>   After him.
> Ah! could I enfold him
>   As I would!
> On his kisses
> Would I die away!

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[22] *Sex Education*, New York, 1924, pp. 177-178.

This is all the girl has in mind: she wishes merely to display her affection; she wishes nothing more and expects nothing more. Such is probably the experience of the average girl who is so eager to have a boy friend and to go out with him. And on the other hand, the boy has no knowledge of the girl's position. He does not know that the girl is different from himself, and when the girl is affectionate he concludes that she is just as passionate as he himself, and that she is feeling the same physical urge as he.[23]

We believe that if this difference of the sex instinct in men and women is brought home clearly to adolescent boys and girls, they will be able for themselves to answer any questions that will come up about kissing, petting, and flirtations of all kinds. They will have at least the knowledge of what is proper. The knowledge, of course, will not necessarily give them the strength to do what is proper. For that we must fall back upon what has been said repeatedly about the need of religion for building up strong character. Moral codes or ideals pass, as the Rev. Dr. John M. Cooper reminds us,[24] in the individual life through four stages: they must, first, be known; next, admitted; then, accepted; and lastly, lived. Throughout all these four stages, religion has much to say and to do. It makes right ideals known. Through Faith it gets them admitted. Through the doctrines of Faith it supplies the motives for accepting ideals. Through grace it provides the supernatural means for living the ideals.

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[23] Cf. Hardy Schilgen, S.J., *Um die Reinheit der Jugend*, Düsseldorf, 1927, pp. 10-11 and 124-125.

[24] "Diagnosis and Treatment of Factors in Conduct," in: *National Catholic Educational Association Bulletin*, Nov., 1929, p. 566.

Given an understanding of these principles, parents will know what to tell their adolescent boys and girls. Yet, in the last instance, with the freedom from restraint that is so general in our day, it will depend upon the character of the individual whether he will have the courage to act upon principle. While we recognize, therefore, the basic importance of character training, we cannot deny that an essential factor in this character training is to let boys and girls know plainly about the dangers that they might otherwise not recognize or might at least underestimate.

Plain and prudent speech may likewise open the eyes of girls to the danger their dress may be for the opposite sex. Women and girls often have no idea what a factor their dress, which may be objectively indecent, is for the sex urge of boys and men. To the wearer the dress may seem harmless, but to the boy or man it may be the occasion of severe temptation. It is for this reason that we find Pope Pius XI insisting: "The unfortunate mania for fashion causes even honest women to forget every sentiment of dignity and modesty. The decrease of womanly reserve has always been a sign of social decadence. The vanity of woman causes the disintegration of the family. An immodest mother will have shameless children. A shameless girl cannot be a good wife. It is possible to dress with ladylike decorum without imitating monastic severity." But, not satisfied with laying down the principle, the Pope issued instructions on Jan. 12, 1930, through the Congregation of the Council, to have the Bishops throughout the world take active measures in behalf of decency of dress.

Young people should be told plainly the reason for the social conventions that demand "hands off." These conventions are the outer defenses which society has erected to protect the inner soul of the home and of chastity. The seriousness of flirtations should be brought home to the boy and the girl. They should be told that it is frivolous to indulge in play that may entail serious obligations. With certain characters it will be helpful to show the silliness of some of their antics. A book that will help young people to realize the silliness of adolescent flirtation is Booth Tarkington's *Seventeen*.

GROSS IGNORANCE OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

A Catholic doctor writes:

> Great ignorance prevails among both boys and girls on the sinfulness of petting. Few of those who attempt to defend it, however, will fail to admit that their consciences bothered them about it. Rarely, but occasionally you will find a boy ignorant of the sinfulness of self-abuse or fornication. In this latter case the boy has had the proposition that the Sixth Commandment refers only to married people—that unmarried couples are free to do as they please.

That this Catholic layman is not alone in complaining about the ignorance of our young people in these matters may be inferred from the Report made by the Rt. Rev. Lambert Burton, O.S.B., Abbot of St. Martin's Abbey, Lacey, Washington. In commenting on the findings made by the Committee on the Teaching of Religion appointed by the National Benedictine Educational Association, he states [25] that there is much complaint with regard to the treatment of what are called "the avoided subjects." For instance, one respondent writes:

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[25] *Bulletin of the National Benedictine Educational Association*, 1929, pp. 17-18.

> I believe what is needed is a more practical explanation of moral laws—things young men wonder about today—for instance, nearly every young man knows nothing of the attitude of the Church toward "necking parties," but he wants to know.

Another informant urges instructions on

> the young man's duties on entering married life; reasons and examples on "Why a man should be as pure as a woman"; on "Why sins against the Sixth Commandment will lead to destruction quicker than anything else," etc.

A third says bluntly:

> Youth unwarned, or merely lightly warned, is blinded by the glamour of sex impulse. Sensible and intelligent company seems "dumb" and dull; fast, bad company seems bright and interesting. The result—shame, disease, and degradation. Why cannot instructors be a little more frank on sexual ethics?

Abbot Burton concludes:

> The extremely urgent need of instruction in these subjects does not remove the difficulty of imparting the necessary knowledge. Yet, insofar as it is necessary it not only *should*, but *must*, be given. Some may say that students already know all that we can tell them. To a degree, that may be true. Probably all our students know the laws of nature, but there may be many who do not know the laws of morality as affecting these phenomena. Some may urge further that these boys have been instructed by others. Still, we know that such is not often the case, and, very unfortunately, in many cases the instruction is never given.[*]

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[*] Cf. *supra*, p. 83.

However, it is not only our college students that recognize the need of more instruction on the ways and means of preserving chastity. Sister Mary Antonina, S.D.P., submitted the following question to pupils in the third and fourth years of Catholic high schools: *Are there any topics that you would like to have included in your religious course that are not already there?*[26] The boys suggested the following:

Topics	Frequency
More stress on morals	55
Candid discussions of the problems of the youth of today	50
Vocations—the different states of life and their duties	47
Fuller explanation of the sixth and ninth Commandments	39
Matrimony—a fuller discussion of responsibilities, sacredness, and relationships in marriage	37
Character formation	19
Instructions on the Mass	17
A discussion of the objections to the faith raised by non-Catholics	17
Church's attitude towards mooted topics	15
Frank talks on the facts of life	14
Dangers of undesirable companionship	10
Safeguards against the loss of faith	10
Company keeping	9
Lives of the Saints that are practical	8
Honesty in our dealings with others	7
Dangers to faith	6
Habit formation	6
Necessity of charity in deeds	5
Confidence in the Church as our guide	5

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[26] *Religious Instruction in the Catholic High School*, Washington, D. C., 1930, p. 46.

Missionary work	4
Proper use of leisure	4
There is too much there already that is not practical	14

From the several pages of remarks quoted by Sister Mary Antonina from the boys' questionnaires, we select the following as pertinent to our subject:

> More practical problems of everyday life—not those of centuries past. Be modern with a modern world.
>
> Impress on the boy's mind the necessity of spiritual cleanliness and tell him the right way, so that he will not get a wrong start.
>
> I think that the seriousness of the sins of the flesh should be taught even in the second year of high school.
>
> Sex problems that would give a different view to the young student. I believe these talks should be given to juniors and seniors especially.
>
> Explain the Sixth Commandment more fully.
>
> Far too little is said particularly about the Sixth Commandment. While it is a very difficult subject to handle, I think too little about it and its dangers are known.
>
> Not enough is said about moral life. That is why so many ghastly mistakes are made.
>
> People say that "Silence is golden"; silence is *criminal,* therefore we want more sex talks in plain words.
>
> The problems of sex. Many times I did not know whether I committed sin or whether I was just vulgar. Still I do not know whether necking or kissing is a sin.
>
> I believe that the course should not only give more time to purity but also to the effects of impurity.
>
> Talks on the sins that we are not supposed to know anything about. Why not let us in on them so that we can be prepared for the temptations connected?
>
> An explanation of the sex problem. Many get this related to them by other young people and get the wrong idea of such things, whereas if it is explained to

them in the right manner, they will learn the great evil of such things and think no more about them.

The girls were asked the same question as to which topics they wished to be added to the course in religion, and furnished the following data:

Topics	Frequency
More stress on the duties in the different states of life and on vocations	81
Topics that are practical and that concern daily life	78
More stress on the teaching of morals	54
Candid discussions of the problems of the youth of today	33
Present-day moral topics that are questioned and the Church's attitude toward them	30
Character formation and what constitutes real womanhood	27
Life of Christ	17
More frank talks on purity	16
Matrimony	14
Habit formation	14
Dangers to faith	14
Courtships and relations with the opposite sex	12
Mission work	12
Lives of Saints with practical application	12
Discussions of the objections to the faith raised by non-Catholics	12
Toleration and fairmindedness	10
Dangers of undesirable companionship	7
Dangerous reading	7
Obedience and submission to the Church	7
Use of leisure	7
Divorce	5
The Mass	5

Nothing added, but a better explanation and a more pràctical application of what is already there 20

From the remarks added by the girls to their questionnaires, we select the following:

Subjects relating more to the life of a young girl. I find that at times they are often shunned. I mean company keeping, marriage, vocations, etc.

Teach us what we are up against and what we will have to face.

The way the Catholic girl should conduct herself with boy friends should be discussed more frankly by the teacher.

We should have topics on marriage and courtships because one never knows what to do and what not to do when such things stand before her. Then, too, something should be said about the relations of men and women to each other.

The discussion of petting, smoking, drinking, etc., of the modern girl of today, and the attitude of the Church towards such things.

More intensive study of divorce, why it is forbidden, and the Church's attitude towards the social and moral problems of the day.

A woman that marries should know that this life has obligations and should know everything that is necessary for the training of children.

I don't know. However, I think more care should be taken to instruct Catholic youth. I can't say just how it should be done. There are many things that I cannot ask my mother and that I would be ashamed to ask a Sister, and the priest has no time to answer. . . . The instructions at the sodality meetings attempt to solve them, but only once a month!

Our religion course should make us realize all the harm that immorality is causing and also that God should be the only one to take life.

Occasions of Sin

A religious survey conducted early in 1926 at Villanova College likewise disclosed the need of more explicit instruction with regard to the specific dangers confronting our young people. In reply to the question: *On what points of Catholic Doctrine do you feel you need instruction?* purity and matrimony were mentioned 25 times, while the next highest number—16—was given for Apologetics.[27]

If such is the state of affairs in our colleges and high schools—we fear that the reports quoted reflect general conditions—[28] what will be the situation among our young people who do not enjoy the benefits of a Catholic secondary education? Priests, parents, and teachers may find it helpful to consider the facts revealed by the study made by Drs. Peck and Wells.[29]

One question submitted to 186 college graduate men was divided into four different items and read as follows: *What is the effect of the following activities in regard to increasing or decreasing sexual cravings and the difficulty of control?* Item *A*: mixing socially with better class of girls at dances, parties, etc.; item *B*: minor love making (summer flirtations); item *C*: reading modern problem fiction containing realistic love scenes; item *D*: attendance at the average musical comedy.

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[27] *Spiritual Searchlights*, Villanova, Pa., 1926, p. 38.

[28] It is but fair to mention that the writers of our textbooks in Religion are beginning to meet the need for more explicit instruction. An admirable example of what can be done in this direction is presented in *Religion Outlines for Colleges*, Course IV, Washington, D. C., 1928, pp. 97-103, where the author, the Rev. Dr. John M. Cooper, treats in detail of the dangers connected with the association of the sexes.

[29] "On the Psycho-Sexuality of College Graduate Men," in: *Mental Hygiene*, Oct., 1923.

The results for the different items are:

Reply	Item A	Item B	Item C	Item D
Increase	10	60	84	74
Decrease	54	6	6	6
Unclassifiable	25	18	34	42
Omitted	11	15	14	11

The replies are significant. One reply finds that the flirtations of item *B* "will often lead to sexual intercourse." Another finds that, if sincere, the effect was not to stimulate sex; if insincere, the opposite effect."

Twenty Catholic doctors were asked their opinions on the four items of the Peck-Wells' inquiry, and their replies are summarized in the following:

> *A*. Love-making, petting and kissing ordinarily arouse passion—few are immune; some get disgusted when the girl makes too ardent advances; extreme liberties cause the height of sexual excitement in perhaps 15 or 20 per cent of the cases, and in a certain type of boy this sometimes constitutes the only type of sexual sin, solitary masturbation being unknown or regarded as degrading and filthy.
>
> *B*. The reading of realistic love stories seems to be more common among girls than boys and is a dangerous factor in most cases because of its influence on the imagination.
>
> *C*. Mixing socially with the better class of girls may be an indifferent factor in some cases. If the girls behave themselves, this causes sexual emotion only with particularly sensitive boys; public dances cause much more trouble, both because of loose conversation and because the girls encourage close hugging, and the like; and the

immoral dances, so common to-day, are nothing more or less than sensuality set to music. Moreover, on any such occasions "the better class" are commonly enough given to drinking and petting in autos, and the aftermath is often dangerous—when the boy takes the girl home and does not say goodbye at the door.

D. Attendance at the average musical comedy is hardly indifferent in the case of young people.

These findings require no further comment. They merely confirm the wisdom of Mother Church in demanding of her children that they protect their virtue by the safeguards of chastity. They prove the timeliness of the warning issued by Pope Pius XI in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth.*[30]

> It is no less necessary to direct and watch the education of the adolescent, "soft as wax to be molded into vice,"[31] in whatever environment he may happen to be, removing occasions of evil and providing occasions for good in his recreations and social intercourse; for "evil communications corrupt good manners."[32]

Priests will find the facts as stated by the physicians a help in proving the reasonableness of what the Church demands in the way of safeguarding the chastity of her children. Teachers and parents will realize from the evidence that has been submitted that they have ample justification for being suspicious of the flirtations of the young people. The young people should be shown that they are weakening themselves mentally and morally by indulging in wishy-washy sentimentality. Their eyes should be opened to the seriousness of the affairs. A girl who makes herself an easy victim may be marked as cheap forever afterwards. A boy who boasts of the number of girls he can kiss and fondle is far from being a gentleman. He should be brought to understand that he is exposing himself as well as the girls to exciting passions that may get beyond their control and he is cheapening himself and his victims in a way that may render them easy prey for designing scoundrels.

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[30] P. 31.

[31] Horace, *Art of Poetry,* V, 163.

[32] I Cor. VI, 8.

In addition to the *Outlines of Religion*, recommended on p. 321, we should like to recommend Dr. Exner's *The Question of Petting*[33] as offering further arguments that may bring the young people to their senses. Dr. Exner brings out the essential selfishness implied in petting. The real lover aspires to personal development and perfection in order that he may the more readily contribute to the happiness of his mate in love. The petter seeks chiefly his own pleasure and uses other persons to that end as he would use a thing, each to be cast aside when it has served his purpose. Dr. Exner shows, too, how petting will defile some of the finest faculties of the boy and the girl.

Redeeming Features of Adolescents

In this matter as in all other problems of adolescence we must appeal to the better nature of the young. While we may have stressed the defects of adolescence, we did so in the belief that it is essential to discover a boy's or a girl's weaknesses before we can minister to them. But we do not consider the present generation of boys and girls at all hopeless. In fact, we believe that, despite their excessive devotion to exciting pleasure and their spirit of disobedience, our young folks to-day are an improvement upon the previous generation in three particulars: a higher degree of frankness, a keener sense of humor, and a most refreshing absence of hypocrisy. These redeeming features constitute an excellent natural basis upon which to rear a lofty spiritual structure of supernatural goodness. Wordsworth tells us that all things are less dreadful than they seem, and our adolescents, too, are much better than they seem to the superficial observer. Their faults stand out prominently, and we know most of them after a week's acquaintance; but the revelation of their goodness is a very slow process. The mischievous boy has at least energy, but those who are good from mere inertia, are discouraging. Those young people who have spirit enough to be in tricks, may appear very hopeful to the discerning teacher and parent.

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[33] New York, 1926.

While we have read many a jeremiad on the hopelessness of the present generation of young people, we have hardly ever found a saner view of the situation than that presented by Sister Josephine Mary, S.N.D.:

> "It is impossible to make boys and girls reverent nowadays," sighs the teacher, "with their pleasure, their dress, their liberty." The evil is everywhere rampant, is admitted by all observers. But this is no excuse for dropping our arms. On the contrary, the greater the danger, the greater should be our endeavor to multiply our weapons. "Times" were always evil, just as "times" are always modern to contemporaries. It is much talk of the obvious. If our dangers have increased to an alarming extent, so have our blessings. Who would prefer the old, fettered days of Jansenism to the spiritual era opened by our Holy Father, Pius X, by early and frequent Holy Communion? Good Alban Butler tells us that St. James, Bishop of Nisibis, who lived in the fourth century, bewailed the fact that "men usually live in a hurry, with-

> out finding leisure to look into themselves or to study the great science which ought to be their only affair." And St. John Chrysostom was grieved that on Good Friday "people ran to see certain horse races, and on Holy Saturday to games exhibited at the theater." Yet the Holy Bishop weakened not in his line of duty, nor should we. This tone of fatalism or of depression regarding our special difficulties is a smoke screen to cover our deficiencies in the fight. God has placed us here and has called us to help those of our day. He who is "the same yesterday, to-day and forever," asks us to interpret His mind and His heart to the little ones. The human heart now, as always, tends naturally to the good, the true, and the beautiful as to its end.[34]

Of adolescents, too, is it true what Ruskin says of the world in general: "All things are literally better, lovelier, and more beloved for the imperfections which have been divinely appointed, that the law of human life may be Effort, and the law of human judgment Mercy." Given a sympathetic understanding of adolescence, priests, parents, and teachers will realize the frequent need of a kindly word. Kindness works wonders with the boys and girls who, alas, must often fight the grim battle alone. What Canon Sheehan says of young priests is no less true of our boys and girls:

> Dear me! if only the young people had fair play and the tonic of a kindly word—but no, kind words appear to be weighed out like gold; and then comes deadly depression and heart-searching, and all because courage is extinguished, and all noble aspirations checked, until in middle age we find only the dried-up, cauterized,

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[34] "Religion in the Elementary School," in: *Thought*, March, 1929, pp. 609-610.

wizened soul, taught by dread experience to be reticent and cautious, and to allow splendid opportunities to pass unutilized rather than risk the chances of defeat. And the epigram on these dead souls is: *"Foris pugnae, intus timores*—Battles without and fears within."

CHAPTER XIV

PHYSICAL HEALTH AND THE RECREATIONAL FACTORS

G. Stanley Hall in his introduction to Dr. Stowell's *Sex for Parents and Teachers*[1] referred to the deluge of books on sex education and deplored that much of the literature was positively misleading, often quite erroneous as to facts, and omitted some of the most essential practical points. Then he went on to mention what he believed "the most essential practical points":

> We must, no doubt, always rely, first of all, upon physical culture and bodily training, in which the draft showed such amazing shortcomings among our young men. A close second of this must be interests, zests, enthusiasms, which set a backfire to lust. Young people must glow and tingle and have excitement, and if they cannot obtain this normally in intellectual, aesthetic, and motor ways, they are prone to have their calentures in the sensuous field.

While we cannot agree with Dr. Hall that physical culture and bodily training are "the most essential practical point" for training in chastity, we admit that the control of the sex instinct has a physical basis as well as a basis in honor and especially in religion. Dr. Max J. Exner tells of a young man[2] who was having a severe struggle for sex control. It was discovered that he had formerly been active in athletics; at that time he had very little difficulty. Now he was neglecting physical exercise and his difficulty had become intense. Father William J. Lockington, S.J., has brought out very clearly the correlation between bodily health and spiritual vigor;[3] and there can be no doubt that on the positive side one of the necessary requirements for the control of the sex impulse is to take sensible care of the body. The physical passions are liable to clamor most loudly for gratification in the physically weak. It is when energies are low and the nerves jaded that the lower man most easily springs into control. Many people are making their fight unnecessarily difficult and may lose their struggle largely for lack of exercise and intelligent care of the body.

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[1] New York, 1921.

[2] *The Rational Sex Life for Men*, New York, 1914, pp. 78-79.

The Physical Factor

Physical exercise promotes proper circulation and is apt to strengthen the nerves, and hence is a factor in controlling the temptations to the solitary sin and other forms of immorality. It will prevent the daydreaming that is so fruitful a source first of mental, then of physical masturbation. When we remember that there is five times as much physical energy in children as in adults, we realize their greater need for physical exercise and proper care of the body. The body of the young is like a frisky spirited colt or broncho. If it is treated kindly and fairly it will carry the boy galloping toward his goal in life. Therefore we must give the body a chance and develop its strength properly. But this does not mean that the boy may allow the colt to throw him or to run away with him. He has no other choice: either he must break the broncho, or the broncho will break him.

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[3] *Bodily Health and Spiritual Vigor,* New York, 1919 chs. I-VI.

Careful training in respect to food, rest, fresh air, and especially in regard to exercise will ward off many temptations. Dr. Harry H. Moore rightly advises[4] that if an overabundance of life seems to demand sexual activity, the youth should not yield to temptation, waste his energy, and lose his self-respect, but should control this impulse or force and make it his servant: "By *immediately* turning to vigorous exercise, or hard mental or physical work, this impulse may be converted in a wonderful yet mysterious manner into a great constructive force in his life. The control of this force seems to contribute definitely to muscular strength, endurance, energy, courage, and will power, and also to intellectual growth and spiritual development."

Doctors Peck and Wells asked the following question of a group of college graduate men: *What has proved the best outlet to turn your thoughts away from sex: intellectual work—muscular exercise—social activity—special hobbies, etc.?* More than one factor is often named in the replies. The number of mentions is as follows:[5]

Muscular exercise	112
Intellectual work	56
Social activity	48
Hobbies	15

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[4] *Keeping in Condition*, New York, 1927, pp. 47-48.

[5] "Further Studies in the Psycho-Sexuality of College Graduate Men." in: *Mental Hygiene*, July, 1925.

Miscellaneous	6
Unclassifiable	9
Omitted	15

Doctors Peck and Wells find the marked preponderance of muscular exercise to be significant: "It confirms what most students of the topic would expect." In the absence of the religious appeal, purely natural helps loom large among the factors that help to keep under control the sex instinct. Among the replies received by Doctors Peck and Wells, the recourse to prayer was mentioned only twice. It is interesting to compare with their findings the replies received by putting to Catholic college men almost the identical question: *What means have you found best in overcoming temptation?* Seventy-three per cent of the more than 1,000 replies mentioned supernatural factors. In the following table the natural remedies mentioned by the students are classified into mental, moral, and physical factors:[6]

Mental	
A change of thought	42
Thought	
of consequences	36
of parents	9
of mother	14
of girl	6
of free will	1
of athletics	1
of strong men	1
of uselessness of sin	1
Forget temptations	10
Self-respect	11
Diversion	3

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[6] *Official Bulletin of the University of Notre Dame*, Oct., 1926, p. 125.

Develop sense of justice	2
Develop sense of honor	1
Knowledge	1
Discover occasions	1
Build up confidence	1
Have regard for health	1
Talks with good people	1
Think before acting	1
Use common sense	1
Desire to be good	1
Realize conditions	1
Recall ideals	1
Moral	
Avoid occasions	38
Use will power	28
Use mortification	11
Good company	7
Good girl	1
Associations with daily communicants	1
Cultivate perseverance	5
Self-control	4
Physical	
Keep busy	18
Do something	16
Run away	9
Exercise	5
Athletics	3
Work	2
Walks	1
Cold shower	1

The Power of Mind over Body

These returns are significant. They bring out plainly two facts: the preponderating influence of the supernatural element; secondly, the power of mind over body. These evident conclusions from indisputable facts warn us, first, not to expect too much from purely natural means; secondly, not to overestimate the potency of purely physical helps.

Pope Pius XI shows in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth* that the Church does not ignore the factor of physical exercise, for he says:[7] "Nor may even physical culture be considered outside the range of her maternal supervision, for the reason that it also is a means which may help or harm Christian education." We admit that physical exercise may prove a helpful factor for the training in chastity; yet we cannot trust absolutely to athletics or other physical means, for there are certainly many individuals whose sexual desires are not controlled by muscular activity.

The cult of the body as practiced by some physical culturists may prove a positive danger. As soon as we forget that the body is only the servant of the soul, or only a part of the unit which is man, we are apt to create dangers for chastity. Great human victories are won not with muscle, but with great thoughts and feelings. The body alone cannot control sex, but the control is possible only to the properly integrated faculties of the whole human being. Overindulgence in athletics may prove directly harmful insofar as over-fatigue is an excitant of sex. And the youth being over-fatigued will lack the control of both his imagination and his sexual impulses.

Of course, there is much less danger for the young while they are hiking, or swimming, or canoeing, or engaged in other athletic sports, than if they were attending a sex play or a salacious movie, or drinking, or reading vile literature. Even the mere passive attendance at athletic sports is preferable to these latter diversions, since the interest in the game will occupy the imagination and the mind and afford material for conversation that will not deal with sex. Still, there is danger here, too, if the excitement over victory or defeat is excessive, since even the spectators lose their heads because of the influence of crowd psychology. Hence it is not surprising to have Dr. Woolston say that "in university towns, the students supplied a part of the patronage [of disorderly houses], especially after athletic events and celebrations."[8] The President of one of our Catholic universities admitted on the eve of an important football game: "I am less interested in the outcome of to-morrow's game than I am worried about what our students may do after the game is over."

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[7] P. 8.

Some doctors are apprehensive lest homosexuality may be developed when young men are brought much together for the purpose of indoor athletics. They believe that when men wear scanty clothing, or no clothing while bathing, the perversity may show itself. It may well seem that the fears of these doctors are not altogether groundless, as some athletic clubs have become infected with this vice. Furthermore, we have the historical evidence offered by the bathing Greeks and Romans, among whom the vice was notoriously common. Father Schröteler, S.J., reports a wide prevalence of the vice in Germany today, and some observers note that the perversity is on the increase throughout the civilized world. The habit may be traceable to a large extent to congenital influences, yet the familiarity that is developed in athletic circles and that breeds contempt for moral dangers of this kind may well be a contributory factor. At all events the lesson of history is plain: bathing and athletic nations have always displayed some tendencies in this direction.

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[8] *Prostitution in the United States*, New York, 1921, p. 78.

Consequently the rule with even so wholesome a thing as athletics must be—moderation. While we have the ideal of the sound mind in the sound body, and while we may place before our young people the ideal of the college athlete of whom the college boys say with pride "A man who never did anything to hurt his body or his soul," we must not forget that excess in athletics will defeat their very purpose. People who are very fatigued are liable to be sexually very much excited. While we cannot ignore the rights of the body, for in the case of merely mental education the spirit lives in an abstract world alone and cannot control and inspire physical actions, yet we should not forget that one of the chief purposes of physical culture should be to serve the mind, to divert it from unwholesome sex matters and give it other interests. Miss Agnes Repplier had this function of physical recreation in mind when she wrote:[9] "The children to be pitied, the children whose minds become infected with unwholesome curiosity are those who lack cheerful recreation, religious teaching, and the fine corrective of work. A playground or a swimming pool will do more to keep them mentally and morally sound than scores of lectures on sex hygiene."

What a serious mistaking of the function of athletics is it therefore if gymnastic sports are calculated to force the mind into the very channels of sex? It is this abuse of a good thing that Pope Pius XI had in mind when he wrote in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*:[10] "In gymnastic exercises and deportment, special care must be had of Christian modesty in girls and young women, which is so gravely impaired by any kind of exhibition in public."

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[9] "The Repeal of Reticence," in: *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1914.

What a boy is depends to a great extent upon what he does when he has nothing to do. Brother Paul, the famous Director of St. Mary's Industrial School in Baltimore, used to say: "The greatest help to discipline is to keep the boys busy and deeply interested in study, work, and play." The idle boy is on dangerous ground. Work is life, and idleness is death. There was much wisdom in the practice of the Jews to let every boy learn some manual trade. The hermit of old was wise when he commanded the youth who was assailed by bad thoughts to keep active all day long. The youth confessed after trying the experiment for three days: "My bad thoughts are all gone; during the day I have no time to think of them, and at night I am so tired that I cannot keep awake."

A proper amount of work is healthful in every way both for the growing boy and the girl, and parents should be on the alert to provide opportunities for such activity. Dr. Rowell, of Columbia University, conducted researches a few years ago which prove conclusively that the adolescent boy and girl may work at carefully selected jobs with the best of results. But modern life has made it difficult for city children to do any kind of work, and hence we must look elsewhere to provide the outlets for the superabundant energy of the young people. Just as the dammed-up water must be directed, the spirited horse must be guided, and temper must be given an outlet along safe lines, so too is it not enough to repress the sex instinct, but it also must be directed into constructive activities. Dr. Harry H. Moore advises rightly [11] that if passion or instinct at times seem insistent, the youth should hurry from the surroundings which tempt, and throw his whole life, body, mind, and soul, into a strenuous game or into some other wholesome and absorbing activity. The boy will find that passion is diverted and becomes a source of added energy, courage, and vigor in the activity into which he has, for the time, thrown his life. Dr. Moore is happy in his reference to Ulysses. When Ulysses' ship passed the Isle of the Sirens, he had himself tied to the mast so that he might not be enticed by their singing. Orpheus was able to pass, with obvious indifference, by this point of danger because he was able to produce such beautiful music as made their singing sound discordant. "So, by cultivating wholesome interests, enthusiasms, and affections in their lives, men may crowd out these base passions."

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[10] P. 24.

THE SUBSTITUTION APPEAL

All these efforts represent what Professor R. S. Woodworth, of Columbia University, calls the substitution appeal. He asks the youth to remember that the sex instinct is, after all, only one of the instincts, and that the young man is naturally drawn in other directions as well. Love of manly sports is based on instinct, though not on the sex instinct; and it is well known that some young men sidetrack the insistent demands of sex by throwing themselves into such sports.

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[11] *Keeping in Condition, New York,* 1927, pp. 102-103.

The love for success, the zest for achievement, is based on instinct, and affords another outlet for the young man's energies. The youth will certainly be more of a man at the age of twenty-five or thirty if he devotes his earlier years to achievement than if he allows the sex instinct to dominate these years. Nor will his young manhood be a dull time if this is the direction in which he spends his energy. Few things are more satisfying than the joy of achievement and the feeling of manly competence.

The life of the youth need not be all strenuousness, either. The joy of comradeship, interest in men and affairs, fun and laughter, poetry, music, and art will all find their place. These appeal to various instincts and natural tendencies of man and afford different outlets for his energies, while at the same time they develop him along several lines. While his more strenuous activities are equipping him for the serious business of life, these lighter activities equip him to utilize and enjoy the leisure moments of his later years. Professor Woodworth reminds the youth that if he gets to know a happy and successful man of mature years, he will find that only a part of his happiness arises out of the sex life. Sex is only a part of his life. He has other sources of satisfaction, and youth is the time to acquire these sources of satisfaction. Consequently the young man or woman should let the sex impulse bide its time, and should find an outlet for the ardor of youth in other direc tions. Other impulses and interests should therefore be stressed with our young people.

To put into effect this substitution appeal calls for self-control, as the clergyman tells us in *Jane Eyre*:

> It is hard work to control the working of inclination, and turn the bent of nature; but that it may be done I know from experience. God has given us, in a measure, the power to make our own fate; and when our energies seem to demand a sustenance they cannot get—when our will strains after a path we may not follow—we need neither starve from inanition nor stand still in despair; we have but to seek another nourishment for the mind, as strong as the forbidden fruit it longed to taste—and perhaps purer; and to hew out for the adventurous foot a road as direct and broad as the one Fortune has blocked up against us, if rougher than it.

Parents should co-operate with teachers in any efforts that are being made for leisure-time activities. The English Public Schools are models in this respect, as practically all extra-curricular activities are in the hands of the students and take up much of their time and energies. Music, drawing, play acting, museums, and various kinds of collections, literary associations and the like are managed by the students, who give much attention to these things and reach high standards.

We cannot commend too highly the efforts that are being made by priests throughout our country in behalf of the leisure time of our boys and girls. The Right Rev. John F. Noll, Bishop of Fort Wayne, remarked recently that during the years that Catholic children are in school, the priest has a closer contact with them than Protestant ministers have with Protestant children, but after the days of school are over.

the Protestant boy has an advantage. The Catholic educators of the past who achieved the finest results never underestimated the importance of wholesome recreation for the young. Bl. Don Bosco, like St. Philip Neri, loved noisy and lively recreations. His instructions were simple: "Make all the noise you wish: jump, run, shout at will. Engage in gymnastics, declamations, dramatics. Keep busy."

Much would be gained if we could get our young people to appreciate what is real joy. Bishop Keppler's *More Joy*[12] should prove helpful in teaching the lesson. As no flower can develop properly without the sun, so our young people cannot develop properly without joy. The life and spirit of the home, the school, and the Church must abound with joy. St. Francis of Assisi was fond of saying to his Friars: "Let those who belong to the Devil hang their heads; we ought to be glad and rejoice in the Lord." He who was called Brother Joy realized that vice is born, not of joy, but of joylessness.

The Preventive System of the Saints

Priests will obtain splendid results by adopting the preventive system of the saints. The preventive system puts boys and girls in the moral impossibility of sinning. It turns their energy into the proper channels and so keeps them out of mischief. The presence of the priest elevates the recreational standard; his mere interest, if manifested, in a basketball team, in a group of the Catholic Boys' Brigade, or in a troup of the Catholic Boy Scouts or of the Catholic Girl

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[12] St. Louis, 1918.

Scouts will often be enough to prevent profanity and immoral talk.

Fathers Furfey[13] and Hennrich[14] deserve credit for giving us the books that enable parents, priests, and teachers to give intelligent attention to the recreational factors in the lives of our young people. Those who are interested in the large subject of ethics and athletics will find valuable information in Chapter XII of *American College Athletics* published in 1929 by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The same Foundation published in 1929 *The Literature of American School and College Athletics.* The deeper implications of the boy-scout movement are brought out by Mr. William C. Menninger in "The Mental-Hygiene Aspect of the Boy-Scout Movement," in *Mental Hygiene.*[15] Father Becker offers suggestions for taking care of the recreational needs of the girls in his article published in the *Ecclesiastical Review,*[16] "A Girl Scout Troup in Every Parish."

Father Raymond J. O'Brien has recently published an account of how pastors can avail themselves more and more of the resources of the Boy Scouts:

> The Holy Name Society of the Archdiocese of Chicago, under the leadership of its Spiritual Director, the Right Reverend J. B. Sheil, is at present engaged in the formation of parochial Scout Troops, organized and administered under Holy Name auspices in such a way as to provide for boys attracted to Scouting all that the

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[13] *The Gang Age,* New York, 1926; *The Parish and Play,* Philadelphia, 1928; *You and Your Children,* New York, 1929.

[14] *Boy Guidance,* New York, 1925; *Boy Leader's Primer,* Milwaukee, 1930; *Play Guidance,* New York, 1927.

[15] July, 1929.

[16] Feb., 1930.

> Boy Scouts of America can offer, and at the same time make the dominating influence in the Troop that of the priest. The Holy Name Society has effected an agreement with the Boy Scouts of America under which a diocesan priest is accredited as Catholic Scout Commissioner in the Archdiocese, and is assisted by a corps of Deputy Commissioners composed of priests throughout the Archdiocese. With this type of organization of Scout Troops, the boy's spiritual welfare will receive more attention than his advancement in the technique of Scouting. Scouts from the parochial schools will be expected to exercise a kind of lay apostolate in bringing their public school playmates into their Troop, and consequently under the personal influence of the priest. In such Troops, Christ's program for boy guidance will take pre-eminence over the Scout program.[17]

The efforts made to protect our Catholic young people from dangerous reading and recreations as well as to provide for them proper substitutes have the approval of Pope Pius XI, for he says in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*:[18]

> Worthy of all praise and encouragement therefore are those educational associations which have for their object to point out to parents and educators, by means of suitable books and periodicals, the dangers to morals and religion that are often cunningly disguised in books and theatrical representations. In their spirit of zeal for the souls of the young, they endeavor at the same time to circulate good literature and to promote plays that are really instructive, going so far as to put up at the cost of great sacrifices, theaters and cinemas in which virtue will have nothing to suffer and much to gain.

[17] "And Now Come the 'Boyologists,'" in: *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, May, 1930, p. 808.

[18] P. 31.

If the Church will not provide entertainment for the young, the Devil will. The so-called problem play which starts people discussing the ethics of the eternal triangle, and the musical comedy which "amuses the tired business man with its irresponsible chatter and its display of feminine charms," cannot be considered helpful to the training in chastity. It is notorious that some theatrical exhibitions and motion pictures are directly incitive to vice and profligacy. While we have the positive duty of supervising the recreations of the young, we should not sit by idle while public amusements cater to the lowest impulses of the boy and girl.

Much can be done by proper Catholic activity. The *Ladies' Home Journal* remarked recently that the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae "has done the most effective and constructive work in film betterment for the community." We realize what such betterment will mean for public morality when we remember that actual statistics show that 115,000,000 people in this country alone see motion pictures every week. It has been computed that one-tenth of these are Catholics. Hence all the more reason for Catholic activity in the direction of raising the moral tone of what is thrown upon the screen. The survey of the more than 200 motion pictures released by the American movie-industry every month has been accomplished by the Motion Picture Bureau of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae through two Reviewing Committees of forty members each, one functioning in the studios of New York and the other group serving in Hollywood. Their time is so divided over the days and hours of the week that practically every picture released in this country and most of the foreign ones are pre-viewed in the studios and reported in writing. Each month the Bureau issues a printed list of endorsed pictures suitable for Catholic schools, colleges, and church halls; for Catholic adult audiences; and for educational programs. The list is a free service and is distributed through state and city chairmen of the Federation throughout the country. The lists are at the present time going annually to about 100,000 persons. The Catholic review is being broadcasted on a weekly schedule from nine radio stations. Forty-two papers in this country, and several foreign ones, are printing the endorsements.[19]

The protest of this group of Catholic college women turned to the wall a vile movie-tone picture on birth control. Among their other achievements we may mention that through their method of co-operation with the movie-industry and constructive criticism they succeeded in having expensive revisions made, titles reworded, episodes cut, and whole scenarios cast into the discard.

These results show what can be done through intelligent and concerted activity.* Much more can and should be done in this direction. The movies, the theater, modern dress, servants, the automobile, the crowded tenement, the magazine, the scandal sheet, the dance floor, the street corner are not the only agencies that offer sex perversion to our young people. Our priests may not rest content with excoriating our boys and girls for succumbing to the insidious temptations presented on all sides. We must offer positive

[19] Cf. *America*, March 15, 1930, p. 559.

* Cf. *supra*, pp. 2 ff.

relief. Father Edward F. Garesché, S.J., is right in reminding us of our positive duty in this regard:

> When a quilting bee or a harvest festival was the event of the season for youth there was no special need of a program, it is true. Now that movies and dance halls and beaches and road houses and social clubs and night clubs and gyms and street corners and speakeasies and morbid magazines and yellow papers and what-not compete commercially for the time of our youth of both sexes, we cannot offer the excuse that programs are not needed now because our forefathers did not need them.[20]

[20] *America*, Nov. 23, 1929, p. 156.

CHAPTER XV

WARNING AGAINST THE SOCIAL DISEASES

We have insisted throughout the present book that much more is gained by idealism than by stark realism, that chastity is promoted more effectively by a hopeful outlook than by gloomy views. Dr. Edward L. Keyes says justly: "Sexual purity, founded upon the most spiritual ideals, appears to us of more importance to the welfare of the race than any amount of venereal disease. The very rarity of such purity in the ugly struggle of life makes it none the less precious. We can no more restrain a native admiration for the purity of age than we can resist the fascination of innocence in youth."[1]

However, we cannot ignore actual facts, and among the saddest of actual facts is the wide prevalence of the so-called social diseases. A supernatural view of these afflictions will regard them as palpable evidence of God's wrath over the sins of the race. Just as pain is a symptom of disease, so the intense suffering induced by these diseases is an indication of the greater sufferings to come to the guilty one as a retribution for sin. It is true, the diseases may afflict also those who are guiltless. There are innocent wives, children, and others who have been infected through no fault of their own. Yet the diseases remain a symbol of God's wrath and a warning to all to obey the law of the Lord.

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[1] "Morals and Venereal Disease," in: *Social Hygiene*, Jan., 1916, p. 52.

Fear as a Deterrent from Sin

There are contradictory views as to the effectiveness of warnings about these diseases in deterring men from sexual offenses. Plentiful evidence can be adduced to prove that the fear of infection is not of itself sufficient to deter men from sin. In the French army the practice obtains in certain regiments upon the arrival of recruits to initiate the new men, without sparing their feelings, into the dangers to which they expose themselves if they indulge in sexual pleasures. Still, it is notorious that nine times out of ten the recruits seek out the pleasure. The prospect of the pleasure has captivated them.[2]

Officers of the American Navy report the same results. In the *Annual Report of the Surgeon General, U. S. Navy*, to the Secretary of the Navy, for the fiscal year 1924, we find this significant statement:

> The men can be warned repeatedly of the risks they run in exposing themselves, and they can be instructed as to the nature of the venereal diseases and the possible effect upon their future welfare and hope of promotion if they become diseased. Candor compels the statement that the preventive value of such instruction is usually so little and the number of known exposures so great that it is difficult to believe that more men would have exposed themselves if they had not received instruction. Various medical officers have reached this conclusion after giving such instruction hopefully and earnestly and with the utmost care in an experimental attempt to find

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[2] Gillet-Ross, *Innocence and Ignorance*, New York, 1917, pp. 18-19.

> out how much good is accomplished by instruction. *The general conclusion is that the returns of the labor expended are very meager or inappreciable.*[3]

In the same *Report* we read that information given to the men about the frightful consequences of sin "makes little impression upon them." The *Report* also admits that there are many men in the Navy whose continence is not at all due to the fear of infection:

> They take care of themselves either because they are married or are looking forward to marriage, or for some other reason are unwilling to run the risk of infection. These may represent 25 to 30 per cent of the personnel; it is not possible to make a close estimate. These men do not need advice and warning, and on the other hand a considerable percentage of the men cannot be influenced. *Their habits are not changed by loss of pay or even by becoming infected one or more times. Behavior depends largely upon antecedents, home conditions, early training, and ethical standards in the home and home community.*[4] Everything considered, it appears that for a considerable percentage of the personnel the predominating influence of the sex urge cannot be combated successfully by any method so far devised.

The inefficiency of knowledge alone is proved also by the appalling statistics of the social diseases among the cultured. Berlin statistics quote 9 per cent among working people, and 25 per cent among university students.[5] Charlotte Brontë has well brought out the craving of the sinner to taste the pleasure of sin—no matter what the consequences. In *Jane Eyre* we have in Chapter XIV the following dialogue between Mr. Rochester and Jane Eyre:

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[3] Italics ours.

[4] Italics ours.

[5] Gatterer-Krus, *Educating to Purity*, New York, 1927, p. 103.

> "I wish I had stood firm—God knows I do! Dread remorse when you are tempted to err, Miss Eyre; remorse is the poison of life."
>
> "Repentance is said to be its cure, sir."
>
> "It is not its cure. Reformation may be its cure; and I could reform—I have strength yet for that—if—but where is the use of thinking of it, hampered, burdened, cursed as I am? Besides, since happiness is irrevocably denied me, I have a right to get pleasure out of life; and I will get it, cost what it may."
>
> "Then you will degenerate still more, sir."

But as the reader will recall, not even the thought of degenerating still more can restrain Mr. Rochester from continuing to sin. Still, there are those who believe that something can be accomplished by informing the young about the physical dangers of sin. For instance, Captain J. B. Frazier, Senior Chaplain of the Navy, wrote in 1918: "It is my contention that a great deal of the suffering resulting from the subject which you treat is the result of ignorance as to the dangers of social vice. A great number of the men of the Navy come from the small towns of the country, where they are not brought in contact with the dangers of a seaport town. These men need to be warned, and, in my opinion, your methods [of enlightenment] will be effective."[6]

We have elsewhere referred to the advice given by the Rev. Dr. Paul H. Furfey to the effect that adolescent boys and girls should be told about the nature of venereal disease, about the physical dangers involved in promiscuity, and about the social

[6] *Social Hygiene*, Oct., 1918, p. 446.

evil. A city ordinance passed in Berlin in 1928 requires that all children be instructed, before their graduation from the elementary school, about the venereal diseases and the proper prophylaxis.[7] Some Catholic writers advocate the showing of wax models to the young for the purpose of illustrating the ravages of these diseases.

Plain Words, but No Horrors for the Young

However, we do not think it advisable to fill the imagination of boys and girls with such horrors or to encourage them to see the specimens exhibited in medical museums. Nor have we much faith in slides or motion pictures illustrating the results of these diseases. Either they are too horrible for words, or the commercial instinct prompts the producers to introduce scenes and pictures that are prurient in order to attract the morbidly curious and the sensualist. We may profit in this respect from the experiences made in Germany. Father Schröteler, S.J., writes as follows on this subject:

> The educator must be on his guard lest he develop in the young people a complex of fear with regard to sex matters. There was, indeed, a time when people thought that fear and dread were the chief factors in sex education. Hence they went to extremes in picturing the consequences of sexual offenses. They believed that by letting the young see illustrations of the last stages of venereal disease, boys and girls would be immunized against the temptations of sex. We know now that nothing could be more false than such an assumption. In the field of sex education, fear alone is the weakest of

[7] *Stimmen der Zeit,* Oct., 1928, p. 5.

> motives. It really does more harm than good. Fear cramps the functions of the soul, fixes the ideas that come to mind, and consequently quite often defeats its own purpose. The Bible tells us, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom"; yet fear is not the whole of wisdom. Without the fear of God we cannot accomplish much in sex education. Yet neither shall we get very far with dread alone.[8]

These results should not surprise anyone who is familiar with the psychology of adolescence. Young people are not afraid of danger. Automobile and aviation records show that they are ready to take all sorts of chances, sometimes with fatal results. After they grow older they will be more impressed by the warnings of physical danger. However, to people under twenty-five, death and disease seem a long way off, and luck is supposed to help them out. Hence we should not expect too much from the recital of the physical dangers involved in promiscuity.

It is well, however, to talk plainly to young men and women about the established scientific facts. Dr. Maurice A. Bigelow reports that ''gonorrheal infection results in tens of thousands of cases in complications, such as heart disease, rheumatism, sterility of both men and women, blindness of infants, inflammatory diseases of female reproductive organs, and other well-marked sequelae of the disease.''[9] Dr. Shirley W. Wynne, Commissioner of Health of New York, quotes as the common opinion of medical authorities that ''syphilis is the greatest single cause of death.'' He explains that though statistics do not show this, since death from an original syphilitic infection may

[8] *Die geschlechtliche Erziehung*, Düsseldorf, 1929, p. 113.
[9] *Sex Education*, New York, 1924, p. 41.

appear under some such designation as chronic heart disease, cirrhosis of the liver, chronic Bright's disease, arteriosclerosis, apoplexy, softening of the brain, locomotor ataxia, etc. He remarks that this disease has been called the great imitator, as it induces other ailments, and the latter become the immediate cause of death.[10] The same authority estimates that ten per cent of the population is infected with the dread disease.

It is not advisable to stress the wide prevalence of immorality and venereal disease. The best reasons for this policy have been advanced by the Rev. Dr. John M. Cooper.[11] First of all, all statistics available are no more than estimates, and it will do no good to create the impression that large percentages of the population are infected. The boy may argue: "If these things are so common, they cannot be so serious." Also he may be tempted to take chances on consequences rather than be unlike the other fellows. The girl on her part may become morbidly suspicious and turn from all idea of marriage and home-making, or keep for the rest of her days a wrong attitude towards all things sexual.

A minister said recently in New York: "All this vociferous and shameless sex interest, sex novels, sex plays, sex films, sex caricatures of psychoanalysis are not cleansing to the mind of the young; they are coarsening. They do not lift up the aspiration towards purity, they accustom the mind to impurity. One thing that this generation deeply needs to learn is that we cannot wash our linen in dirty water."

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[10] *America,* Nov. 19, 1929, p. 137.

[11] *Sex Education in the Home*, Washington, D. C., 1921, pp. 15-16.

If we would keep our young people chaste we must emphasize the moral, the normal, the healthful, the helpful, and the aesthetic aspects of the virtue of chastity. To quote a writer who is familiar with the sad results of sin: "Certainly it is impossible to scare young people out of sinful practices by descriptions of the effects of venereal diseases. It is the positive side of pure, clean love rather than discussion of morbid conditions, that appeals to young persons and affects their conduct in life." [12] Extensive knowledge of vice is not helpful to any individual.

Alcohol as a Factor

A subject that we may not overlook is the connection between alcohol and the venereal disease problem. It is not surprising that so many priests insist in our questionnaire on total abstinence from intoxicating drinks as a factor in training the young in chastity Cardinal Gibbons had good reason for urging all confirmandi to take the pledge of total abstinence until they should be twenty-one. Modern research has confirmed the time-honored belief that alcohol is the most powerful stimulus to sexual debauch. It stimulates desire, while it deprives the individual of self-control and thus dulls the moral sense, weakens the will, and consequently diminishes the capacity of resistance to sex temptations.

A large proportion of men owe their initial debauch to alcohol. Dr. Forel's statistics show that 76.4 per cent of venereal contaminations were effected under the influence of alcohol, and that the greatest number of such infections occurred in persons under twenty-five. Dr. Langstein reports that of 160 men, 74, i.e., 43.8 per cent, were under the influence of alcohol at the time when they were venereally infected. Dr. Möller found among those he questioned that 67.7 per cent were infected while under the influence of alcohol. Dr. Hecht asked about 1,000 patients with venereal diseases, and found that of 673 working-men, 304, i.e., 42.7 per cent, and of 299 students, government employees, and the like, 134, i.e., 54 per cent, had drunk more than usual at the time of the infection. Of 75 married men, 45, i.e., 60 per cent, fixed the blame for the infection on the influence of alcohol. Dr. Woolston reports that the effect of prohibiting the sale of liquor in houses of prostitution has been to reduce their business greatly.[13]

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[12] Howard B. Woolston, *Prostitution in the United States*, New York, 1921, p. 297.

Hence, it is plain that there is a casual connection between alcohol and the venereal diseases. Doctors believe that it is generally not a matter of complete intoxication, for in that case alcohol would seem to have a paralyzing effect on sex, but merely of mild tipsiness which lets the miserable wretch throw care to the wind and forget all his good resolutions.

Dr. Eden Paul explains how even moderate doses of alcohol blunt the finer sensibilities of both men and women, and consequently concludes that alcoholic drink is one of the most potent factors in keeping up the social evil. He reports that it is a common experience with prostitutes that, in the earlier days at any rate, they find it difficult to ply their sinful trade unless under the influence of alcohol. Turning to the man's point of view, he states that there is quite a considerable proportion of young men who, however strong their sexual impulse, object to meretricious intercourse on ethical and esthetic grounds. But it is precisely these refined sensibilities which are blunted by even moderate doses of alcohol—doses insufficiently great to abate the sexual impulse itself. What a warning to those parents who see but a harmless diversion in allowing their daughters in the company of men who carry the pocket flask!

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[13] *Prostitution in the United States*, New York, 1921, pp. 100-101.

Goethe declared youth is intoxication even without wine, and hence it should be clear that the young people must be kept away from alcoholic drink as long as possible. Plato advised in his treatise on *Laws* (2.9), that wine should be forbidden to all young people until they were seventeen, for he contended that "without such a law there would be imminent danger that our youth would fall victims to degeneracy." A Roman proverb has it that Venus will grow frigid without Bacchus and Ceres. And St. Paul says plainly enough: "And be not drunk with wine wherein is luxury."[14] More of our Catholic societies should follow the example of the action taken at the 1929 Convention of the Catholic Rural Life Conference when this group of wise leaders brought to our attention "the instruction of the Fathers of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore" and earnestly recommended to our boys and girls the abstinence from intoxicating liquors.

Our questionnaire returns show that some priests see a connection between the use of tobacco and sexual indulgence. One priest thinks that smoking is dangerous for a girl, as it makes her appear frivolous and hence invites liberties on the part of boys. Some medical authorities see even a casual connection between the use of tobacco and sexual indulgence. Dr. Rohleder admits that the influence of smoking is not so harmful as that of alcohol, but believes that it injures the central nervous system, and hence lowers the power of resistance. This may be a factor in the case of women because of the over-responsiveness of their nervous system which may be increased by indulgence in nicotine. Dr. Hofstätter has demonstrated that nicotine is correlated with disturbances in the function of the thyroid gland and that smoking stimulates appreciably the ovaries and consequently may arouse the sex urge. He notes also—an argument that will have great weight with women—that girls who smoke will age rapidly.[15]

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[14] Eph. V, 18.

Excessive smoking is liable to prove harmful also in another direction. We mean insofar as the slaves to the habit must have satisfaction for their slightest craving, and consequently may suffer such an impairment of character as will make it more difficult for them to resist other cravings. This is particularly true of the habit of cigarette smoking, since the confirmed cigarette smoker must have a cigarette the first thing in the morning and also one before he retires for the night. During the day the craving may prove a veritable obsession, especially if the smoker finds himself so placed that he cannot indulge, and he will be driven to satisfy the craving at the earliest possible moment.

German writers hold that the consuming of sweets, especially in large quantities, may act in a similar way in weakening the character besides supplying heat energy beyond what is needed and hence may thus provide an excitant for sex feelings. Some people believe that tea, coffee, and strong condiments have a stimulating sexual effect, but there is no scientific evidence in support of this view. Still there are other hygienic reasons for avoiding these at least during the years of growth.

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[15] Stern, *Die Erziehung und die sexuelle Frage*, Berlin, 1927, p. 294.

Preying Upon the Ignorant

To return to the subject of the social diseases.

Notwithstanding all the efforts made by lawmakers and social workers to do away with quacks and those who impose on the gullibility and credulity of the public, irreparable wrong is still done throughout the country by the so-called "specialists for men." These may be licensed physicians who reach their clients through advertisements in newspapers, through pamphlets distributed on street corners or through museums for men, the latter being feeders for a medical office located above the museum. Another group consists of "hoodoo doctors," "witchcraft professors," "evil-eye specialists," "herbalists," and hypnotists, who treat in person or through the mails. Then there are the so-called "medical institutes" or "clinics," which are run by laymen for diagnosis and treatment of venereal diseases, and "sexual rejuvenation" or to sell "cures" or treatment by mail.[16]

The Social Hygiene Association has conducted various studies to ascertain the extent to which young men and women resort to druggists for advice or treatment regarding "sexual disorders" and the venereal diseases. One investigator interviewed individuals selected at random on the streets, in pool-

[16] *Social Hygiene News*, Nov. 15, 1929, pp. 3-4.

rooms, barber shops, and other public places in one city. He asked for advice as to whom he should go for venereal disease treatment. The following recommendations were offered.[17] Drugstore (42 per cent), physician (24 per cent), clinic (16 per cent), home remedy (4 per cent), no advice offered (14 per cent.)

We see that Father Vermeersch was right when he argued that proper instruction is needed to protect our young people from fakirs and quacks.[18] Many parents, ignorant of the true situation, may be living in a fools' paradise. They may be brought to realize their duty in this matter when they realize how imminent is the danger of their children being infected if not properly forewarned. The United States Public Health Service reports as follows:

> In a study of 15,000 infected cases it was found that in 57 per cent of these cases, the first sex experience occurred under seventeen years of age, sixteen years being the peak age. On the other hand, the peak age for venereal disease, as shown by several studies, is nineteen for girls and twenty-one for boys. Thus it appears that there is in many cases a margin of from two to five years in which those who have already indicated great moral weakness may be preserved from the terrible effects of the venereal diseases. If, however, these delinquent tendencies are not checked, the possibility of venereal disease infection becomes almost inevitable. Every inquiry that has ever been made into the question of venereal disease prevalence among the prostitute groups has shown that the incidence of infection ranges from more than 60 to 95 per cent and often 100 per cent. In fact, the likelihood of infection of prostitutes and frequenters of houses of prostitution is a matter of such

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[17] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

[18] *De castitate, Rome,* 1919, p. 191.

> reasonable certainty that the courts have uniformly sustained health regulations declaring that all such persons are presumptive carriers of venereal infection and may, by the proper health authority, be subject to examination, held until the results of the examination are known, and if found infected, quarantined and treated until rendered non-infectious.[19]

We realize that this is a disagreeable matter to bring up with parents at any time. But Dr. Lawrence F. Flick has produced evidence in *The Ecclesiastical Review*[20] that should convince priests of their duty of joining in the fight that is being waged against the venereal diseases. This medical writer does not hesitate to declare that the prevalence of these diseases and their dire far-reaching effects on human welfare, human happiness, even civilization, make the prevention of them the paramount task of our age.*

Dr. Flick believes that, taking the civilized world as a whole, the prevalence of the diseases has increased, and their innocent victims in domestic life have grown more numerous. The World War is blamed for the increase, and many think that some of the measures which have been advocated and introduced for their prevention have in reality caused the increase. When medical authorities assure us that "a leper is infinitely less dangerous to others as a source of contagion than a syphilitic," we may well ask how long will society be able to stand up under this burden of sin, crime, and degeneration.

The facts produced by science verify the truth of the Scriptural statement: "The father's sins shall be visited on the children until the third and fourth generation."[21] Where so much is at stake the priest may not hold back. He must join hands with other agencies in whatever promises relief from the Black Plague, and he must use to the utmost the powerful forces of Religion to prevent the contamination of sin and vice and its direful consequences for soul and body.

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[19] *Venereal Disease Manual for Social and Corrective Agencies*, Washington, D. C., 1926, pp. 33-34.

[20] "The Pastor and Health Certificates for Marriage," Oct., 1929.

* Cf. *supra*, p. 100.

It is here again where Religion promises the best results. One of the leaders of the Social Hygiene Association, Dr. Edward L. Keyes, admits that moral prophylaxis holds forth the best assurance of protection against the dread danger:

> With sufficient incentive any passion may be controlled. That the whole world's history is one of uncontrolled passion is no reason to despair. So is the whole world's history one of treachery and murder. We may well be dissatisfied with a past wherein moral influence and church dominion [*sic*] have fought alone against man's passion. We may well invoke every aid that hygiene can afford in the battle against venereal disease. We may well recognize that the ideal opportunity to control the sex passion is in early youth before the tiger that is in us has tasted blood. We may well hope that the combination of ancient ideals and modern methods shall result in a material reduction of the great Black Plague. . . . Until the freedom of medical students from infection bears witness to the contrary, we must grant to moral education the first place in the campaign against venereal disease. The bright light of our new and wonderful science of hygiene must not blind us to the fact that we are still human, that in youth at least the sexual

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[21] Num. XIV. 18.

appetite is indeed man's strongest passion, that this passion is indeed the essential cause of venereal disease, and that for the control of this passion we have but one weapon—the education of the will, moral prophylaxis.[22]

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[22] "Morals and Venereal Disease," in: *Social Hygiene*, Jan., 1916.

CHAPTER XVI

THE RELIGIOUS HELPS

On April 25, 1918, a letter was sent by the United States Government Commission on Training Camp Activities to approximately one thousand chaplains then in the Army and Navy. The letter stated this conviction: "The main safeguard against immorality and the dangerous infections that so often result therefrom must ever be the development, in the individual soldier or sailor, of a set of inner checks or inhibitions based upon religious conviction, personal pride, patriotism, and the desire to lead a decent, useful life, not only for himself, but for his future family."[1]

The experiences gained later during the War fully confirmed the faith expressed in the letter sent out by the Government Commission. Colonel Percy M. Ashburn made extensive studies of men during the World War and confessed: "My opinion based on conversations with men, gratuitous information inserted in replies to questionnaires, and my observations of the men is that by far the most important factors [in promoting chastity] were those inherent in the men rather than in the anti-venereal campaign —factors such as character, religion, love, loyalty, and self-respect."[2]

Yet, despite this pragmatic proof of the power of religion, the religious viewpoint was apparently not stressed sufficiently. The writer of the following letter, a man with wide experience, charged the officers with gross neglect of the religious viewpoint:

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[1] *Journal of Social Hygiene*, Oct., 1918, p. 444.
[2] *Social Hygiene News*, March, 1919, p. 4.

> I certainly appreciate the argument against irregularity of morality from a purely medical standpoint, but I have yet to hear any official, not a chaplain, talk to men about this matter who did not disclaim, or at least tacitly infer, that there was to be disclaimed, any arguments against prostitution from a religious point of view. I have heard many persons holding commissions in the Navy making a strong argument against it from a purely hygienic standpoint. These arguments were sound, but, unfortunately, a total result in general has been to infer that if it were not for the physical danger involved therein, it would be a matter of utter indifference.[3]

We recognize, of course, the difficulty of emphasizing the need of prayer and religion before mixed groups. Some years ago a doctor was giving much of her time to lecturing on the subject of sex hygiene in one of our Western states. No one could have been more earnest in the cause. Yet she insisted on two points: the difficulty of getting suitable instructors in sex hygiene, and the futility of sex instruction which is not supported by an appeal to God and prayer. As far as she could see, the boys and girls got profit from that alone, if not entirely from that. Unfortunately, her appeal to the religious sentiment raised so strong a protest that it had to be discontinued.[4]

Again, we realize that outside the Church a religious appeal must be vague because of the absence of definite beliefs. Turn to any non-Catholic book on sex education and you will find that if the subject of religion is brought up at all, the appeal is of a purely subjective and indefinite kind. One of the best Protestant appeals is that offered by the Rev. Boudinot Seeley in his *Christian Social Hygiene.*[5] But even among the remedies that he suggests for curing "bad habits" the religious element is vague enough:

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[3] *Journal of Social Hygiene*, Oct 1918, p. 450.

[4] *Catholic Educational Association Bulletin*, Feb., 1914, p. 30.

1. Commit yourself unreservedly to the Lord;
2. Resist each temptation instantly and earnestly;
3. Let each temptation be a call to turn instantly to the Lord;
4. Don't compromise with evil;
5. Be vigilant;
6. Keep as far away from evil as you can;
7. Develop your will through exercise and discipline;
8. Have a correct physical regimen;
9. Have your mind occupied with God;
10. If necessary get personal assistance;
11. Never give up.

Still, even such indefinite religious and moral principles are helpful factors in sexual continence. Evidence of their influence may be adduced from the replies to a question submitted by Drs. Peck and Wells to 186 college graduate men: *What has been the greatest factor working for continence in your case? Moral principle—fear of disease—influence of some one person—dictates* (sic) *of the Church—timidity with the other sex, etc.* More than one motive was named by many. The results are figured in terms of the number of mentions as follows:[6]

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[5] Portland, Oregon, 1919, p. 58.

[6] *Mental Hygiene*, Oct., 1923, p. 710.

Dictates (*sic*) of the Church	14
Fear of disease	48
Influence of person	46
Moral principle	107
Timidity	9
Unclassifiable	6
Inapplicable	3
Omitted	24

Dr. Howard B. Woolston, who has probably made the most thorough study on record of the social evil in the United States, admits that "the greatest influence for ideal good in any community is the Church. Its teachings regarding personal morals and social justice are lofty and uncompromising."[7]

The question of Doctors Peck and Wells was submitted to a Catholic physician who has had many years of experience with large groups of Catholic college students, and he admitted that, in the case of Catholic young men who have remained continent, the following factors are the most important in the order mentioned: (1) religion, especially the use of the Sacraments to allay the passions; (2) mother love; (3) moral principles; (4) respect for future wife and family. This physician admitted that fear of disease and timidity with girls were somewhat operative with the young men he has had to deal with, but they are almost negligible in comparison with the other factors mentioned.

Asked as to what the young men who have fallen into sin found the best means for cure, the same Catholic physician writes:

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[7] *Prostitution in the United States*, New York, 1921, p. 297.

> "My mother broke that up for me," one boy said. Prayer and the Sacraments do more than anything else. Next come spiritual direction, encouragement, distraction, the friendship of a priest. Falling in love cures some, but not others. The rosary is a great help. If a boy has it in his pocket and can reach for it and say some Hail Mary's when a temptation comes on he is not so likely to fall. Going to a spiritual director for help when the temptation arises is practically infallible; coming immediately after a fall is a powerful aid. Avoiding the occasion of sin is most important; making other engagements for the time when temptation is likely to be most active; going with clean fellows who will not stand for immorality; taking a total abstinence pledge in case drink is a contributing factor. Disease and damage suits cure some boys, but not so many if the habit has a firm hold.
>
> There is encouragement in knowing that if a boy can avoid the sin for three or four months, and can then put down two or three severe temptations, he is practically cured—the physical tendency is quieted. This is not the case entirely if it is a question of enforced absence of two lovers; in that case a mental attitude of confidence must be built up, along with the determination to use chaperonage to lessen opportunities for sin.

The training of character and the formation of ideals make up the theme of the Sixth Annual Religious Survey of the University of Notre Dame. In it the students freely and anonymously set forth their part in the religious life that a Catholic college offers them. One of the questions asked was: *What means have you found best in overcoming temptation?* Some 1,000 suggestions were offered, and 73 per cent of them were supernatural means. The list may well be a revelation even for priests, who often take the supernatural for granted and cast about for natural helps. It is an eloquent illustration of the text of St. Paul: "But the fruit of the spirit is continency,"[8] as well as of the Book of Wisdom:[9] "I knew that I could not otherwise be continent, except God gave it, and this also was a point of wisdom, to know whose gift it was: I went to the Lord and besought Him."

We have quoted on pages 331-332 the natural remedies listed by the students. We shall here quote the supernatural remedies mentioned by the young men:[10]

Prayer	228
to the Blessed Virgin	50
to other patrons	12
The Hail Mary	28
Aspirations	40
The Rosary	9
Other prayers	17
The Sacraments	13
Holy Communion	164
Daily Communion	115
Confession	24
The Mass	3
The Grace of God	4
Spiritual reading	4
Spiritual advice	14
Hope of reward	2
Recourse to authority (Faith)	1
Seek out a priest	1
Meditation	
on hell	16
on the ugliness of sin	12
on the Passion of Christ	10

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[8] Gal. V, 23.

[9] VIII, 21.

[10] *Official Bulletin of the University of Notre Dame*, Oct., 1926, p. 124.

on death	3
on the Blessed Virgin	3
on Judgment	3
on God	3
on the religious vows	2
on Our Lord	2
on eternity	1
on ingratitude	1
Fear of God	3
Reading of the Passion	3
Talks with God	1
Firm purpose of amendment	1
Search for humility	1
Visits to the Grotto	1
Morning Offering	1
Fiery sermons	1
Appreciation of the state of grace	1

Similar results were obtained by Sister Mary Antonina, S.D.P., in her study based upon the questionnaires obtained from 4,000 Catholic high school pupils.* She obtained the following data in answer to the request: *Name the devotions that appeal to you most of all:*

BOYS

	Number	Per Cent
Devotion to the Blessed Virgin	1420	95
Devotion to the Sacred Heart	1389	93
Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament	1369	92
Practice of frequent Communion	1351	91
Practice of frequent confession	1352	91
Assisting at the Sacrifice of the Mass	1313	88
Devotion of the Rosary	1303	87
The practice of prayer	1290	87

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* *Religious Instruction in the Catholic High School*, Washington, D. C., 1930, pp. 135-136.

BOYS (*Cont'd*)

	Number	Per Cent
Devotion to St. Joseph	1288	86
Visits to the Blessed Sacrament	1265	85
Devotion of the Way of the Cross	1201	81

GIRLS

	Number	Per Cent
Devotion to the Blessed Virgin	1443	99
Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament	1427	98
Devotion to the Sacred Heart	1421	97
Practice of frequent Communion	1410	97
The practice of prayer	1388	95
Practice of frequent confession	1380	94
Visits to the Blessed Sacrament	1377	94
Devotion of the Rosary	1370	94
Devotion to St. Joseph	1355	92
Assisting at Mass	1340	91
Devotion of the Way of the Cross	1335	91

The statements of these young people bring out clearly the fact often noted by spiritual writers that prayer to the Blessed Virgin has a special value. The *Magnificat*[11] describes an unusual case of regeneration from impurity through the help of Our Lady. A medal or a picture of the Blessed Virgin has served as a real aid to many of our young people, and even habitual sinners admit that they have found it easier to control themselves on the feasts of the Blessed Virgin or on Saturday dedicated to the Blessed Mother. It may have been a consideration of the hold that the devotion to the Blessed Virgin has upon the imagination that made G. Stanley Hall admit that he sincerely envied his Catholic friends their devotion to Mary.[12]

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[11] May, 1928.

[2] Cf. Compayré, *L'adolescence. Études de psychologie et de pédagogie*, Paris, 1910, p. 130.

Fruits of Holy Communion

The supernatural remedies listed by the students illustrate the truth of what Cardinal Newman wrote: "It is the boast of the Catholic Church that it has the gift of making the young heart chaste; and why is this, but that it gives us Jesus Christ for our food, and Mary for our nursing Mother?" A special fruit of Holy Communion is the aid it gives in fighting off the temptations of impurity. Holy Communion is indeed "the bread of the elect, and the wine springing forth virgins."[13] Blessed Don Bosco made splendid men of some 200,000 boys, of whom 6,000 became zealous priests. He used to say: "I know only two educational instruments—Holy Communion and the rod, and I have given up the rod and use only Holy Communion." Our Catholic young people who receive into their hearts the Virgin Christ in Holy Communion day after day can be pure. Thousands of them are remaining pure.

The Religious Survey conducted at Notre Dame University in 1924-1925 dealt more specifically with what Holy Communion accomplishes, and the answers given by the students are a revelation of the miracles wrought by the Holy Eucharist. For instance, the answers to the question:

Has frequent Communion lessened your temptations?

Yes	417
No	40
Somewhat	23

[13] Zach. IX, 17.

It has made resistance easier	11
It has increased temptations	10

The following question and answers are significant:

Has it made you more careful to avoid sin?

Yes	488
Somewhat	5
No	10
I can't say	4
I don't think so	2

The results accomplished at our Catholic colleges demonstrate what priestly zeal can do in promoting the practice of frequent Communion among our young people. During one year the Holy Communions received by Notre Dame students reached a total of 250,790. In the fall months the daily average rose as high as 1,146. The registration for that year, 1925-26, was 2,594. Of this number, however, approximately 200 were non-Catholics, and withdrawals reduced the Catholic figure to 2,200. It is notable that 700 Catholic students were quartered off the campus and hence did not have the same facilities for frequent Communion enjoyed by the dormitory students. While 200 of these students received Communion daily, had they been on the campus the total figures would have been even more impressive. The religious survey of that year showed that 84 per cent of the students answering the questions were frequent communicants, approaching the Sacrament once a week or oftener.

But perhaps the remarks made by the students themselves are more impressive and more significant than figures. We find the following remarks in answer to the request: *Please state frankly your own experience with frequent Communion:*

> Daily Communion has transformed me from a spineless jelly-fish into a man.
>
> It has invested me with a holy strength for use in persistent combat with evil and temptation. Glancing backward I see a record of advance against a vice that exactly follows my increase in devotion towards the Blessed Sacrament.
>
> Daily Communion has entirely broken my habit of profanity.
>
> Frequent Communion has made me realize that genuine happiness exists on this earth only when a man's heart is fed with the Body and Blood of Our Blessed Lord. Arguments against this idea are only means of self-deception.
>
> It has given me the power to banish impure thoughts, for which I had a seemingly unconquerable desire before I began daily Communion.

Little wonder that parish priests have found such testimonials effective in appealing to their people in behalf of the practice of frequent Communion.[14] Our people have responded splendidly to the zeal of priests in promoting frequent Communion. And there is no more effective means for training our people in chastity than the practice of frequent Communion.

One of the fine fruits of frequent Communion has been that it has developed a new attitude towards the confessional. There is no longer the fear with which so many received this Holy Sacrament. The majority of frequent communicants have not the slightest human respect about the matter of confession. At Notre

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[14] A selection of student testimonials, *Frequent Communion for College Men*, has been made and is distributed by Notre Dame University.

Dame University 497 of the frequent communicants admitted they had no fears about going to confession, while only 26 acknowledged they were afraid.[15] Some of the students say on their questionnaires that they are not afraid of confession when they know how to confess their sins. A layman, discussing the blessings of our Holy Religion, remarked: "Yes, my sympathy has always gone out to those outside the Church chiefly because they lack the blessings of the confessional."

The Power of the Confessional

There is, indeed, a wonderful power in the confessional:

> It is the holy place where sacramental blood from the wounds of the Jesus Christ falls alike on the heads of the guilty and the innocent, cleansing the former and giving an increase of grace to the latter. It is the place of secrecy, to which a mother may lead her child, but at its threshold even she must depart and leave her child alone with the priest; and that child will tell the priest secrets which would never be revealed by even the most confiding child to the most affectionate of mothers.[16]

In confession we find a realization of much that the psychoanalyst is striving so hard to accomplish. The examination of conscience is akin to the analysis, with this difference, that the former is made under the all-knowing, all-seeing, all-just eye of God, and the result of the self-analysis is made the matter of confession. Emotional experiences play a large rôle in psychoanalysis, and it is the endeavor of the psychoanalyst to recall them in their original strength. We have something similar in the contrition of the Sacrament, but, again, with this difference, that the emotion is no longer sensual, but is purified, sanctified, and truly "sublimated." The leaders of psychoanalysis, especially Adler and Jung, recognize the need of educational measures. What an opportunity for educational measures is afforded by the personal influence of the confessor! The purpose of amendment and penance call for what might be termed the follow-up process of the educator and the resultant improvement of habits. Needless to say, in confession we have the consciousness of the brave, overhanging sky always bright with hope, and this consciousness alone is certain to create in the heart of the sinner new courage, all fructified and supernaturalized with the graces of the Sacrament.

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[15] *Official Bulletin of Notre Dame University*, March, 1928, p. 25.

[16] *Quid vobis videtur?*, Dublin, 1923, p. 22.

Psychoanalysis has, amid all its vagaries, served a good purpose in throwing a new light on the healing power of Confession. Confession induces man, under the guidance of grace, to dig down into his past, analyzing his soul and tracing the disturbing elements which may be infesting, in the form of a complex, his psychical life. Father Charles Mennig, therefore, has good reason for saying that there is genuine abreaction in the purpose of amendment, true catharsis in the regained purity and peace of conscience, and the highest sublimation in the sublime ideals placed before the penitent by Christ and the Church.[17]

What Cardinal Newman says of Confession is espeially applicable to the case of the penitent who must confess sins of impurity:

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[17] "The Right Attitude toward Psychoanalysis," in: *Ecclesiastical Review*, Aug., 1926, p. 124.

> How many are the souls, in distress, anxiety or loneliness, whose one need is to find a being to whom they can pour out their feelings unheard by the world? Tell them out they must; they cannot tell them out to those they see every hour. They want to tell them and not to tell them; they want to tell them out, yet be as if they be not told; they wish to tell them to one who is strong enough to bear them, yet not too strong to despise them; they wish to tell them to one who can at once advise and can sympathize with them; they wish to relieve themselves of a load, to gain a solace, to receive the assurance that there is one who thinks of them, and one to whom in thought they can recur, to whom they can betake themselves, if necessary, from time to time, while they are in the world. How many a Protestant's heart would leap at the news of such a benefit, putting aside all distinct ideas of a sacramental ordinance, or of a grant of pardon and the conveyance of grace! If there is a heavenly idea in the Catholic Church, looking at it simply as an idea, surely, next after the Blessed Sacrament, Confession is such. And such is it ever found in fact—the very act of kneeling, the low and contrite voice, the sign of the cross hanging, so to say, over the head bowed low, and the words of peace and blessing. Oh, what a soothing charm is there, which the world can neither give nor take away! Oh, what a piercing, heart-subduing tranquillity, provoking tears of joy, is poured, almost substantially and physically, upon the soul, the oil of gladness, as Scripture calls it, when the penitent at length rises, his God reconciled to him, his sins rolled away for ever! This is confession as it is in fact; as those bear witness to it who know it by experience.[18]

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[18] *Present Position of Catholics in England*, London, 1924, pp. 351-352.

It is not surprising to find that non-Catholics are gradually awakening to the large possibilities for individual direction in the confessional.[19] Aside from the supernatural character of Confession, the direction of the confessor offers the advantage that the penitent will, when tempted, recall the latest advice given in the confessional, and will likewise be reminded of the account he will have to give when next he kneels before his spiritual father. Aegidius Jais remarks in his book *Das Wichtigste für Eltern und Erzieher zur Pflege der Keuschheit bei Kindern*, first published in Munich in 1784,[20] that his penitents found joy in reporting to him that they had succeeded in controlling themselves.

Father Fulgence Meyer, O.F.M., develops a line of thought in his *Safeguards of Chastity*[21] that will let young men realize the potency of Confession from a new angle. Father Meyer advises the boy, in pursuance of the admonition of St. Paul, to behave as in a spiritual prize-fight. The conservation of manhood, the future happiness in the married state, if such be the boy's vocation, the health and well-being of his family, are the prize. The two gloves that he is to use are prayer and will-power. The contenders in the ring are the boy and his inordinate passions. The confessor is his coach or second. Every week, or every other week, or, at the most, every month represents a round in the battle. Invariably the boy must return to his corner at the end of the round, expose his spiritual wounds, have them cured by absolution, and receive a spiritual rubdown and tonic in the form of solid paternal instruction and advice. A few rounds after this manner, and the falls become less numerous, or at the least less voluntary, and soon there will be nothing but victory after victory, thanks to "the grace of God by Jesus Christ our Lord."[22] A priest who has been zealous in reclaiming the unhappy victims of impurity says that he has never known the method to fail in the case of those who gave it a fair trial. The personal interviews with the confessor will let the penitent realize the true nature of sin. They will take out of his mouth the taste for sin when he realizes that he will have a heavy conscience after the deed.

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[19] Cf. M. S. Sheehy, *Problems of Student Guidance*, Philadelphia, 1929, pp. 109-110.

[20] Reprint, Kempten, 1895.

[21] Cincinnati, 1929, pp. 81-82.

Most penitents should find it helpful to follow the suggestion offered by Father C. C. Martindale, S.J.,[23] with regard to the act of contrition. The penitent is told to accustom himself, even when he has failed, to look forward and *never back.* He should make his act of contrition quickly and without trying to excite himself to sorrow by reflecting on the particular thing he has done, and in short never to spend any time thinking about this subject for any reason whatsoever. He should not say to himself because he has fought for a week and has failed on the eighth day, therefore the whole week of good effort has been ruined by one day's disaster. It may well appear that, psychologically speaking, the penitent is seven to the good. Anyhow, he has done more to build up his character by his hard fight, than to pull it down by his momentary fall. It is well to remember that underneath acts of sin, is the character. The confessional does not profess to create character, and absolution has nothing directly to do with habits. Of course, a good confession has all sorts of good results, quite apart from the supernatural ones; but, strictly speaking, it does not exist to deal with character, but with sins. It does not release one from the duty of forming one's self. In short, to refuse to drill one's self, trusting to absolution to ''put one back'' where he was, at the scratch line of innocence, so to speak, is nonsense. A person alters himself every moment of his life, letting himself go to pieces if he has slacked, toughening himself if he has worked hard. Absolution does not correct a history of slackness, and one sin does not destroy a period of character-formation.

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[22] Rom. VII, 25.

[23] *The Difficult Commandment,* New York, 1927, pp. 50-51

Most men have experience of the favorite stratagem of our passions to shame a retreat, and to turn sharp round upon us at the moment we have made up our mind that the day is our own. George Eliot illustrates this stratagem in the case of one of her heroes who rides bravely by the house where he knows he would be tempted and, proud of his victory, he turns his horse about and calls on the temptress. It may help the confessor to defeat this stratagem of the passions if he will instruct the penitent to heed the advice given by Father Martindale with regard to the purpose of amendment:

> If I were you, I should, of course, resolve with your will, aided by God's grace, "never more to offend Him": but if you really have a frequent habit, I should not use your imagination over a space of more than a day or two. Foresee the next three days, for example, and tell yourself, if it is Monday, that you are going to keep all right till Thursday. That feels manageable, while an indefinite "never," "always," is quite beyond the grasp of the imagination, just as "a million million" is. It

> means nothing. In practice, you don't believe in it. When you say: "I will never offend Thee again," you *feel* in the back of your mind, "All the same, I'm sure I shall." But you needn't feel that about three days, or two. "I know I can hold out for that." When they have passed by, forget them. Do not say: "I shall hold out for a fourth, a fifth, a sixth," but begin again: "I am going to hold out for three days." Then don't add up, and say, "I have now held out for twenty days—I don't believe I can keep it up." Yes, you can, if you look forward and never back. Obviously, you ought to use supernatural means—prayer and Communion: but even in your prayers don't spend time thinking over the thing you want *not* to do, but over what you *do* want to do, namely, pleasing Our Lord.[24]

Confession is a most helpful prophylactic in that it offers to youth during the critical years of adolescence the protection of a paternal friend. It has curative power in that it wipes out past guilt and offers the incentive of starting anew on the upward path. Even naturally speaking, we must recognize that the interior acts called for in the Sacrament have a purgative and curative effect upon the soul. The pedagogy of the confessional makes use, in fact, of all the means offered by Christian education. It offers effective motivation, powerful graces, and ideals that may well inspire young and old to make the greatest sacrifices. There is nothing that psychoanalysis promises that cannot be obtained to an infinitely higher degree by a proper use of this Sacrament that was instituted for the healing and strengthening of the soul.

The confessor should not fail to make it plain to his penitents that they can do what they are determined to do. Let him expose to his penitents the

[24] *Ibid.*

futility of keeping one eye on the temptation they pray not to be led into. Let him arouse in them high esteem for chastity, and the battle is half won. We must turn to the Bible for proper encomiums of chastity: "O how beautiful is the chaste generation with glory; for the memory thereof is immortal; because it is known with God and with men!"[25] A special reward has been promised to the chaste: "Blessed are the clean of heart for they shall see God."[26] The pure of heart are respected by men. Even the degenerate Romans paid special honors to the Vestal Virgins. In this life the rewards of chastity are cheerfulness and contentment, mental vigor and bodily health.

To win and hold that prize, we need the aid of religion. Professor Carlo Fedeli of the Medical Faculty of Pisa, says: *"Senza religione non si da castità"*—Without religion there is no chastity.[27] Whatever leaders outside the Church may think and claim, we know only too well that the foundation of all true character is not in knowledge nor in games and sports and recreational activities, but in religion and morality. Faith teaches us that chastity is a gift of God. We receive this gift upon the day of our Baptism, together with sanctifying grace and all infused virtues; we recover it by Penance when in the course of our lives we have had the misfortune to lose it.

But how can we preserve and develop this supernatural virtue of chastity? asks Father J. Eliott Ross. Above all, by what supernatural means of the same order as itself? "Watch ye and pray," says Our Lord, "that you enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."[28] St. Peter tells us: "Be sober and watch; because your adversary the devil as a roaring lion goeth about, seeking whom he may devour."[29] The whole Christian tradition, by the voice of the Fathers, theologians, mystics and ascetics, has propounded these evangelical and apostolical principles and has insisted upon them. Apart from these principles, no training in chastity is possible.[30]

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[25] Wisd. IV, 1. [26] Matt. V, 8.

[27] Gatterer-Krus, *Educating to Purity*, New York, 1927. p. 185.

It is in the domain of sex that parents and educators must realize that One greater than they must bless the work if it is to be at all effective. Professor F. W. Foerster, though not a Catholic, frankly concedes that religion is essential: "Real chastity and the real avoidance and overcoming of great temptations is (except in rare instances) not possible at all without the educative and elevating influence of religion, at any rate in the case of strong natures."[31] This eminent authority believes that religion is so fundamental and indispensable that without it the young, especially those of strong temperament, will strive in vain to live continently and to banish and overcome violent temptations. He is in agreement with Bishop Sailer: "The most critical situations of youth, such as the period of awakening sexual love, prove beyond doubt that to give an early religious training is the educator's paramount duty. In default of religion, nothing will save the young. Concupiscence takes hold of young people, and like a giant crushes them unawares.''

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[28] Mark XIV, 38. [29] I Peter V, 8.

[30] Cf. Gillet-Ross, *Innocence and Ignorance*, New York, 1917, pp. xvii-xviii.

[31] *Marriage and the Sex Problem*, New York, 1913, p. 214.

Ireland has often been held up as offering proof of the effectiveness of religion for preserving chastity. The fiery nation of the Irish, a Niobe among nations, is distinguished for its faithfulness to religion; ''the result is a purity which is the admiration of the unprejudiced. One would expect increased illegitimacy in a country such as Ireland where the proportion of marriages to population is about one-half the number in many other European countries. But Ireland has the lowest rate of this evidence of immorality of all countries in the world.''[32]

Dr. Doléris, of the French Academy of Medicine propounded the idea that natural science, sports and hygiene are the only safeguards needed by normal natures, and that only abnormal natures needed moral or religious support. But he found no support among his colleagues. In the domain of sex we all are abnormal. In proof we need refer only to the history of all races and to the teaching of Revelation with regard to original sin. In consequence of original sin we have certain defects, ''the chief of which,'' as Pope Pius XI reminds us,[33] ''are weakness of will and disorderly inclinations.'' Though Baptism sanctifies and strengthens the will, this faculty finds it extremely difficult to oppose effectively the concupiscence that is engrafted in man.

What is true in general of will training without religion is certainly true with regard to the most difficult field of sex. Mr. Chesterton insists rightly that

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[32] R. J. Tierney, S.J., *The Church and the Sex Problem*, New York, 1914, p. 9.

[33] *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*, p. 21.

> Sex cannot be admitted to a mere equality among elementary emotions or experiences like eating and sleeping. The moment sex ceases to be a servant, it becomes a tyrant. There is something dangerous and disproportionate in its place in human nature, for whatever reason; and it does really need a special purification and dedication. The modern talk about sex being free like any other sense, about the body being beautiful like any tree or flower, is either a description of the Garden of Eden or a piece of thoroughly bad psychology, of which the world grew weary two thousand years ago.[34]

It is obvious that to attempt will training in this dangerous field without religious motives is to court disaster. Such will training would never amount to more than a system of will gymnastics without enduring significance. Take away from the field of sex control the motive of the eternal, and all higher appeals seem merely fanciful references to a dream-world without reality or power. The illusions of the senses are better able to influence us, and can awaken within us more attractive associations than any merely intellectual and secular philosophy. St. Paul showed a true knowledge of life and the human soul when he wrote: "If the dead rise not again, let us eat, and drink, for to-morrow we shall die." [35] Spinoza anticipated most modern objections to the words of St. Paul when he contended: "This appears to me as absurd as if someone were to stuff himself with poison or unwholesome food because he knew that his body would not endure forever! Or I may compare it to the attitude of a man, who, believing his soul to be mortal, instead of eternal, would therefore prefer to be insane and without understanding.'' Spinoza voices the narrowly intellectualistic view that ignores the totality of human nature. We may readily adduce a number of very reasonable arguments against pleasure-seeking, selfishness, and passion; but, pit them against the elemental urges of life, and they will prove powerless—at any rate in the case of strong and passionate natures. In their case it is only the belief in a higher and eternal life that can overcome the allurements of the flesh.

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[34] *St. Francis of Assisi,* New York, 1924, pp. 40-41.

[35] I Cor. XV, 32

Dynamic Religion

It is not difficult to understand the psychology of the aid derived from religion in combating sexual temptations. Those who have made a study of the psychology of sexual temptation know that the one really effective safeguard is to prevent the temptation from gaining control of the mind. Religion can penetrate and occupy the whole mind, thus leaving no opportunity for sensual temptation to obtain a hold. Religion alone is capable of educating and occupying the most endangered part of the mind—the imagination—and keeping it in a state of purity. Let religion function properly in the life of the individual, and he will not contract vicious habits. Let him be deeply imbued with the consciousness of God's holy Presence, and he will shy instinctively at every suggestion of impurity, just as the eyelids blink when the dust is blowing.

The Bible relates that it was the thought of God's

Presence that saved the virtue of Susanna as well as of Joseph in Egypt. There is a splendid little book, *The Presence of God*, a practical treatise by a master of novices,[36] which shows how this doctrine can be used in training the young in chastity. Were it necessary to prove by experience St. Paul's saying that godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come, the proof could be drawn from the practice of the Presence of God as taught and illustrated by the saintly examples assembled in this little volume. God told Abraham, "Walk before Me and be perfect." Seneca illustrates the principle underlying the practice in a letter to his disciple Lucilius, and it was a familiar practice with General Gordon, as it was a saying of Carlyle, that "all men, if they work not as in a great Taskmaster's eye, will work wrong, wrong unhappily for themselves and you." Other devotional classics dealing with the same theme are *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence, Carmelite of the seventeenth century,[37] and the *Spiritual Maxims* of the same holy writer.

To train ourselves and others in chastity we must transcend what is perishable and earthly. History records that at the time when a country was devastated by epidemics, the prospect of the uncertainty of life led the people to plunge into perfect orgies of debauchery. Such occurrences merely illustrate the general truth that if we concentrate our attention upon the perishing things of earth, we shall starve our moral enthusiasm and stimulate the cravings for pleasure and brute stupefaction. If we entertain a merely human view of life, no matter how beautiful its idealism may be, we cannot adequately counteract this tendency and develop that dignified and controlled attitude towards the whole world and sensual pleasure which is the gift of spiritual religion, with its Pisgah sight of eternity. Many non-believers of our day are still drawing unconsciously upon the after effects of such religion, and it is this circumstance that prevents them from realizing the depth of moral degradation that would ensue if their own ideas were carried out consistently by the masses.

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[36] New York, 1920.

[37] Reprint, New York, 1926.

The Right Rev. Francis C. Kelley, D.D., Bishop of Oklahoma, has ample reasons to insist that supernatural help is needed to resist violent temptations:

> I never knew anyone who had "humanly reasoned" himself off the path of evil; or who had really overcome dangerous temptations, merely because they interfered with his temporal success. I have heard doctors lecture to young men on the horrible consequences of a life spent in yielding to lust or gluttony. I have known young men to give up evil ways for health's sake, or for the sake of prosperity; but I also knew that they did not entirely give them up. Those who are strong enough to be moderate for worldly reasons are wise enough to know that moderation avoids nine-tenths of the physical dangers, and are willing to chance the other tenth. There is only one way to face temptation with any hope of success against it; and that is the Christian way.[38]

In the Germanic languages, the words ''healthy'' and ''holy'' were originally identical. This is no mere coincidence. Unfortunately, however, our age has largely lost sight of this fundamental connection between healthiness and holiness, and many of our modern doctors need to be reminded that if they would fulfill their mission adequately, they must be priests as well as doctors. The Ancient Church has never lost sight of the interdependence of health and holiness: in her laws and in her liturgical year she preaches and practices all that modern sane science advocates with regard to mental and physical balance and health.[39]

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[38] *Letters to Jack*, Chicago, 1917, p. 45.

The need of religion to combat modern immorality is admitted by leaders outside the Church. In the *Preliminary Synthesis and Integration*,[40] we find some excellent suggestions as to the part that theological seminaries should take in equipping prospective clergymen for their task in dealing with the problem. The courses in psychology, sociology, religious education, and moral and pastoral theology should give particular attention to present-day conditions. Theological seminaries should not only teach ethics and the morality of the family, but should give the seminarians a good working grasp of the unsatisfactory social conditions that make for the lowering of moral standards of judgment and conduct that prevail in our American cities and rural districts. Even some of the professors in these seminaries are unaware of the changes wrought in the home by the industrial revolution and the World War. A reading of Father Schmiedeler's *The Industrial Revolution and the Home*[41] would give professors and students an insight into actual conditions.

While we agree with the recommendation that seminarians should be informed of some sex neuroses

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[39] Cf. Richard A. Muttkowski, "Practical Hygiene of the Church," in: *Thought*, June, 1926.

[40] New York, 1921, pp. 55-56.

[41] Washington, D. C., 1927.

—Dr. James J. Walsh's *Psychotherapy*[42] will be useful in this connection—we cannot approve of the suggestion that they do field work in connection with psycho-therapeutical courses.

However, we agree with the statement that both scientists and religious workers have often been one-sided in dealing with the subject. It is obvious that the scientists alone cannot reach the heart of the trouble, and it is likewise true that priests are not always as familiar as they ought to be with the helps afforded by science. Even non-Catholic leaders recognize now that the movement that was originally one against venereal diseases only, may not be limited to a mere campaign for material health and efficiency. What is needed now is to combine the facts and ideals of religion with the findings of science and the methods of the teacher.

Here there is a large field open to those who would serve our nation. When we remember that religion is the most important factor in promoting chastity, we realize how serious is the problem to bring this factor to bear upon a generation that is growing up without any knowledge of religion. An examination of 1,373 pupils in New York City recently revealed the fact that 800 of them do not have more than a bowing acquaintance with the Ten Commandments. Some of them did not even know, when questioned, what they were. Such conditions do much to account for the increase of youthful crime.

It was Mr. H. G. Wells who coined the phrase "Education or Catastrophe." The phrase would express truth if it were amended to read, "Religious Education or Catastrophe." The facts and opinions gathered by Dr. Davis from the study made among college women prove just what fruits are obtained from education without religion. A similar condition of affairs is revealed among college men by an editorial in the January, 1930, issue of *Varsity*, the undergraduate literary magazine of Columbia University. In appealing to the undergraduates to answer a sex questionnaire, the writer asserts that no one will contest the fact that religion and morals are in a critical state. The question he would propose to the undergraduates for discussion is "whether the present generation should make an attempt to return to the beliefs and practices of our ancestors, or whether we should attempt, on our own behalf, to create new standards, to realize that there can be no return, and that progress must go forward, even if, to an older generation looking on with eyes of the past, it seems to be a decline." The editorial writer frankly endorses Mr. Bertrand H. Russell's recent book *Marriage and Morals*, in which the author advocates adultery, fornication, and trial marriage, condones prostitution, and has even a kind word to say for Sadism and Masochism. The student-editor hopes that the undergraduates will hasten to catch up with this leader of the advance guard of moral "progress." Father James P. Gillis, C.S.P., editor of the *Catholic World*, comments justly:

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[42] New York, 1923, pp. 472-490.

> If all undergraduates, or even a majority in the "great" colleges overtake Mr. Russell and rally round his banner, the education of youth will spell catastrophe for the nation. That is to say, it will, unless we Catholics save it. The immediate purpose of our educational system, elementary schools, high schools, colleges, and uni-

> versities is to save our own people. The secondary purpose is to save our country. If we don't save it, no one will.[43]

That there is reason for this alarm, we see from the first answers received to the sex questionnaire circulated among the undergraduates at Columbia. A news dispatch of the United Press of February 15, 1930, reported that the first 75 answers show that 65 students consider the moral code antiquated enough to be supplanted, while 10 declare they are well satisfied with things as they are. Sixty flatly announced they would not marry a girl unless she had had previous "sex experiences"; 15 answered contrarily. The question *Do you believe in sexual relations outside of marriage?* brought 55 answers of "yes," and 20 of "no." Another question read: *Does religion have any appeal to you as part of a personal philosophy?* Fifty-seven answered "no," and 36 answered "yes."

Such conditions warrant Pope Pius XI in quoting with approval the statement of Tomasseo:[44] "The school if not a temple, is a den. When literary, social, domestic, and religious education do not go hand in hand, man is unhappy and helpless."

When the tree of faith is sickly, we must examine the root for the grub of sensuality, and we may likewise say that when sensuality is rampant, the life of faith is waning. What we need to offset the sensuality of the age is real piety and real religion, not pietism or religiosity. Youth needs a masculine religion if it is to carry captive their restless imaginations and their wild intellects as well as touch their susceptible hearts. Too many parents, it is true, do not bring up

[43] *Baltimore Catholic Review*, Feb. 28, 1930.

[44] *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*, p. 27.

their children in this way, and are more occupied in "sissifying" than in "virilizing" them. In many of our schools, too, religious education is not yet integral, and sentiment plays a larger part than intellect and will; there is too much heart and not enough head. Finally, true religion is never purely external, but touches "man whole and entire, soul united to body in unity of nature, with all his faculties, natural and supernatural, such as right reason and revelation show him to be."[45]

Mr. Arthur C. Benson, though not a Catholic writer, gives expression to a principle that we may well heed:

> I do not at all believe in making the religious service too "boyish" in character. I well remember the dislike I felt as a child to being made to sing children's hymns. I did not like to sing, "We are but children weak," because I did not feel weak, and I did not wish to be reminded that I was; still more offensive was being made to sing about my "little hands." I did not think them little, and I did not see why they should be made the subject of general remark. Such hymns are more for the pleasure of older people, who are charmed by the sight of innocence and weakness asserting their own claims. But the boy delights to feel himself a pilgrim, a soldier, a hero; and he should be made to feel that his part in the battle is as important as that of his elders.[46]

Also, in pleading for religion in the moral education of the young, we must emphasize the truth that, in order to act as Christians, we must first of all act as men. We must train the young people to be pure, honest, generous, loyal, brave—because it is fair and square, but *likewise* because they are Catholic children, and God and their religion want them to be all this and more. By training our boys and girls in this way, we shall do our part to remove the occasion for the charge sometimes made that Catholic educators (the agents, not the system) do not make enough of the natural virtues—natural forces and motives—in bringing the young people up and out. The "don'ts" and the "do's" are regulated by the standards of mortal sin and the confessional. "Don't be sneaky, because it's mean. It's a sin—only a venial sin, you needn't confess it. Do a good turn to the other fellow, because it's an *act*, not because it's fair and square." The Protestant boy, on the contrary, so it is said, is taught not to lie, because it's mean; not to cheat in the game, because it isn't fair. Perhaps there is something in all of this. Of course, the better way lies in the middle. Let us build up the natural and the supernatural, the latter on the former. Grace presupposes nature. The natural must be interpenetrated with the supernatural. The supernatural is not a mere second story, but should be connected organically with the natural means.

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[45] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[46] *The Schoolmaster*, London, 1903, pp. 138-139.

But we have elsewhere dealt with the subject of how we must use natural aids in the work of training the young for the battle with temptation.* For the present we should like to recall the need of adapting our religious teaching and training to the particular group we may be dealing with. Priests and teachers do not always remember that there is a large scale of differences in the spiritual abilities of our people. What might be effective motivation for men and women will not do for children; what might appeal

* *Supra*, pp. 328 ff.; see also *infra*, pp. 402 ff.

to the cloistered monk or nun will not be most helpful for the young man or woman in the world. We think the following instruction written by a priest an admirable illustration of how the average boy and girl may be instructed with regard to the proper defense in the hour of temptation:

> In the first place, avoid temptation as best you can by keeping out of danger. But if temptation does come, *say a brief prayer or aspiration and then turn your mind aside to something else.* For instance, you could think of some favorite crucifix, or of a picture of the Blessed Virgin, or of your work or of your games. That is giving the temptation the slip. Say a little prayer, keep perfectly calm, and give it the slip—there it is in a nutshell. If you get excited, you are only stirring up humors in the body, and the temptation becomes worse. Avoid, if you can, a frontal attack on a temptation against purity. Next to getting you to consent, the frontal attack is what the devil wants, because it will give you trouble. There is a principle in warfare which says: never do what the enemy wants you to do. Dodge the temptation and you disappoint the devil. And you can dodge it by turning your mind aside. Two vivid images cannot exist in the mind at the same time, because one drives out the other. (In the young the imagination is very vivid. Play off image against image. Tell them to think of the tabernacle door, or of some crucifix, and say "My Jesus, help me." Needless to say, the advice is good for all.) I remember reading what the Little Flower once said to one of her novices. The novice said, "I found it very hard to get over a certain temptation." And the Little Flower, who had great common sense, said: "Why did you try to get over it; why didn't you get under it?" That is what is meant by telling you to dodge the temptation.[47]

[47] *Quid vobis videtur?*, Dublin, 1923, pp. 105-106.

OUR PATRONS AND MODELS

This reference to the Little Flower is admirable in bringing the power of that charming Saint to bear upon the everyday problems of the child. The saints, however, must be presented as beings of flesh and blood, for only thus will they appeal to living human beings. The life of St. Stanislaus Kostka by Father William T. Kane, S.J., entitled *For Greater Things*,[48] is a model in presenting this Saint in a way that will appeal to a boy. A boy had been baptized Stanislaus, but never wrote out his given name, as he was ashamed of the "Polish" Saint. But, once he read *For Greater Things*, he was ever after proud to write out with a flourish his full name.

Priests and teachers often do not realize how weak is the influence of the saints upon the lives of children.[49] Our treatment of the saints' lives is largely to blame for this lack of dynamic appeal of these greatest of all heroes. In their treatment of the saints, both priests and teachers often create the impression that saints have been placed by God under glass cases to be stared at, and wondered at, and prayed to, but not to be brought down to the floor, into our daily lives as having been men and women of the same bone and flesh as we, afflicted with the self-same trials and temptations. What Father Cuthbert, O.M.Cap., says of the early Franciscans is pre-eminently true of the saints: "In their own persons they proved the Catholic principle that the antithesis of spirituality is not humanity but brutality. Man is never more truly human than when he is most spiritual, and never spiritual when he is not human.''

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[48] St. Louis, 1915.

[49] Cf. Kirsch, *The Catholic Teacher's Companion*, New York, 1924, pp. 428ff.

St. Aloysius is generally held up to our boys as the model and patron of chastity. Yet it has been our observation that he rarely appeals to our boys. How could your American boy ever take a live interest in St. Aloysius if he learns to know him only from the pictures and current descriptions of the Saint? The boy realizes that so unearthly a look is quite beyond him, for he cannot imagine himself with the scourge in one hand, the crucifix in the other, and his eyes riveted on a skull. But follow the example of Father Martindale and tell that same American lad of the pluck of St. Aloysius, of his manly courage in fighting the temptations of the flesh, of his learning curse words from the soldiers among whom he moved in his early childhood, and then tell him of the difficulties he had in unlearning the bad habit. Tell him, too, that St. Aloysius enjoyed sports, and that he confessed that he would not give up a game of billiards even if he knew that he should die in a few hours, because even while playing he was doing the holy will of God. Tell your boy also of the hothead that St. Francis de Sales was in his boyhood, how his temper at times got the better of him, but how he struggled and fought until he had broken this temper and brought it under control.

None of our young people are perfect; none are saints; and, hence, if we would get them interested in the saints of God, it will not do to misrepresent to them the saints as though they had always been paragons of heroic virtue. On the contrary, we must show them the saints in the making, in the beginning of their fight for God and virtue, when they were boys and girls with much the same frailties and weaknesses as afflict the boys and girls to-day. But at the same time we must emphasize the all-important difference between the saints and the average human being: the saints fought manfully against their faults and the devil's temptations. Only in this way can we hope to bring the saints close to the hearts of our boys and girls.

Apparently our teachers do not always realize how much would be gained if the saints were more vital to our Catholic people. They may be induced to make more efforts in this direction if they will discover for themselves how weak is their influence upon the lives of our boys and girls.* Let any teacher make the test himself and ask his pupils to state in writing, first, who is his favorite hero and, secondly, why he has selected this particular hero. The answers will probably reveal to the teacher the need of doing a great deal before the saints will be in the lives of the young people what even a non-Catholic writer, Professor F. W. Foerster, expects of them in this regard:

> The saints are of imperishable importance in the world of education. They illuminate and demonstrate the teaching of Christ by linking it up with everyday life and practice. "Thou shalt" is indeed important, but "Thou canst" is of even greater importance; and this is the lesson which is forced upon us by their mighty and consistent example.

But, once the saints are brought into the lives of our young people, the boys and girls will be interested not only in their deeds but also in their teachings. If we get our young people to know the charming humor and the fine human qualities of St. Philip Neri, they will be interested in his ideas on preserving chastity. Here is what St. Philip advised: (1) Shun bad company; (2) do not pamper the body; (3) avoid idleness; (4) be diligent in prayer; (5) frequent the Sacraments, especially Confession. St. Francis de Sales (he will appeal to the boys after they have been told about the bad temper he had in his youth) gives the following rules: First: Be extremely careful and prompt in turning away from the danger of impurity: "human bodies resemble glasses, which cannot be carried without the risk of breaking one another; thus, we may never permit anyone to trifle with us." Hence the good rule, "Hands off." The second rule is: Be pure in thought and desire and averse in will to impurity; for, says St. Francis: "It is impurity to behold, to hear, to speak of, to breathe, to touch impure things if the heart takes delight therein. Like the bee, we should not only refuse to touch flesh, but hate and avoid all odors, like impurity, arising thence." The fourth rule is: Do not associate with impure persons, "for infected, immodest persons can scarcely speak to anyone of either sex without injuring their purity." The last rule of the Saint is: Associate with chaste and virtuous persons, and read the chaste and spiritual word of God.

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* Cf. Kirsch, *The Catholic Teacher's Companion*, New York. 1924, pp. 427 ff.

Father Kilian J. Hennrich, O.M.Cap., has shown in his *New Life: a Word about the Seraphic Youth Movement** how the Third Order of St. Francis would bring to our young people not only the joy of the

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* Detroit, 1926.

Little Poor Man but also all the religious aids furnished by Mother Church.

Priests and teachers may well be hopeful in their attempt to interest our young people in the saints. In her study of 4,000 high school pupils, Sister Mary Antonina, S.D.P., found that the lives of the saints made an almost equal appeal to both boys and girls, the average being 92 per cent for girls, and 88 per cent for boys. It is significant of the adolescent's worship of heroes that the lives of saints were among the highest in frequency in the types of helpful reading mentioned by the young people. The table arranged by Sister Mary Antonina [50] quotes the number and percentages for each of the four years of high school:

	Numbers					Per Cent				
	I	II	III	IV	Total	I	II	III	IV	Tl
Boys	332	360	368	260	1320	91	88	89	82	88
Girls	380	310	330	330	1350	95	92	90	92	92

However, much remains to be done to make the lives and teachings of the saints such dynamic factors in the lives of our people as the Pope has in mind when he says in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*:

> Indeed, the saints have ever been, are, and ever will be the greatest benefactors of society, and perfect models for every class and profession, for every state and condition of life, from the simple and uncultured peasant to the master of sciences and letters, from the humble artisan to the commander of armies, from the father of a family to the ruler of peoples and nations, from simple

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[50] *Religious Instruction in the Catholic High School,* Washington, D. C., 1930, p. 133.

> maidens and matrons of the domestic hearth to queens and empresses.[61]

Blessings of the Retreat

All who are interested in the subject of training in chastity must rejoice over the rapid growth of the retreat movement. It is during the time of the retreat that the full force of religious influences becomes operative in the soul, and some individuals find the solitude of the retreat necessary to get their bearings, to see things aright—as God sees them—and to gain new energy of will. What even one retreat may accomplish is seen in the case of the penitent thief hanging beside Christ on the cross. His first retreat was his last retreat, and it made a saint of him, for he observed religiously the three rules for a good retreat: silence, reflection, and prayer. When advising his people to make a retreat, the pastor may have recourse to the arguments a business man offered for making a retreat:

> When I am over-tired with work, and all the little details of life seem to become mountains, I go to a monastery near San Francisco for what we call a "retreat." I see no one from the outside. I do not read the newspapers. Every day I listen to short talks, or lectures—talks about life and death; the shortness of life; the inevitableness of death; the right way to live in preparation for a happy death.
>
> Perhaps this sounds gloomy to you. I do not find it so. It helps me to recover my sense of proportion, to realize the pettiness of the little things that have troubled me. It is a sort of spiritual house-cleaning. And I come out to the world again feeling refreshed and assured as to the essentials of life.

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[61] P. 33.

While non-Catholic writers contend that fear and repression alone are insufficient to control the sex instinct, we must insist that no modern researches have disproved the truth of Scripture: "In all thy works remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin."[52] One of the best features of the retreat is its insistence upon the thought of death, judgment, hell, and heaven; for the consideration of these solemn facts remains a most potent force in controlling elemental passions. St. Augustine witnesses to the power of these considerations:

> Thy right hand was continually ready to pluck me out of the mire, and to wash me thoroughly, and I knew it not; nor did anything call me back from a yet deeper gulf of carnal pleasures, but the fear of death, and of Thy judgment to come; which, amid all my changes, never departed from my breast.[53]

As far as chastity is concerned, the best fruit of the retreat will be the conviction of the need of heeding Christ's warning: "Watch and pray." We doubt whether the essential need of prayer for chastity has ever been brought out more convincingly than in this humble petition of St. Augustine:

> All my hope is nowhere but in Thy exceeding great mercy. Give what Thou enjoinest, and enjoin what Thou wilt. Thou enjoinest us continency; and "as I knew," saith one, "that I could not otherwise be continent except God gave it, and this also was a point of wisdom, to know whose gift it was."[54] By continency verily are we bound up and brought back into One, whence we are dissipated into many. For too little doth he love Thee,

[52] Ecclus., VII, 40.

[53] *Confessions* (Pusey's translation), London, 1909, p. 156.

[54] Wisd. VIII, 21.

who loves anything with Thee, which he loveth not for Thee. O love, who ever burnest and never consumest! O charity, who ever burnest and never consumest! O charity, my God! kindle me. Thou enjoinest continency: give what Thou enjoinest, and enjoin what Thou wilt.[55]

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[55] Confessions (Pusey's translation), London, 1909, p. 68.

CHAPTER XVII

THE SUBLIMATION APPEAL[1]

Without faith in the spiritual world, the human spirit will, in the end, lose faith in itself. But the faith that is kindled by the spirit of Christ will ennoble the human spirit and will give it ever increasing strength and confidence. The influence of religion converts all natural instincts and urges into agencies for good. No purely natural support will be adequate in the long run. Even the moral stimulus will require to be continually deepened and strengthened by the religious appeal. It is not at all easy to hold in check the forces which nature arouses for the propagation of the race. But, given the religious consecration, the higher tendencies towards chivalry and self-denial will prove powerful forces. But without this consecration, even the most refined developments of sexual emotion will be like the white foam on the crest of the wave, for they will always tend to return to their primitive form; without religion there can be no enduring check upon sensuality. Yet, as grace presupposes nature, so the consecration by the supernatural motives does not nullify the good results of natural motives. In fact, we should lose a great deal if we did not avail ourselves of some of the natural forces that are at our service.

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[1] *Sublimation*, as used here, has nothing whatever to do with Freud's or Jung's concept of the term, but is employed in the meaning given it by the Rev. Dr. T. V. Moore, O.S.B., in his chapter on Sublimation, *Dynamic Psychology*, Philadelphia, 1924, pp. 241ff.

It is true that the vast bulk of the modern literature on sex treats the subject from the viewpoint of the earth earthly. It looks at the subject from *below*, from the material side. Religion, however, looks at the subject from *above*, approaches it from the standpoint of spiritual health. Religion does not concern itself primarily with safeguarding the health of the body and the economic factors of chastity, but with a majestic gesture it directs us "*Sursum corda.*" It points to the long line of saints—men and women—who overcame the trammels of sensuality and led chaste lives while in the flesh. Their example arouses in man his secret yearning for true freedom, the unquenchable thirst with which the soul seeks the eternal fountain of its life.

There is only one force more powerful than human love, and that is divine love. The way to rise above the allurements and deceptions of the senses is not by a mere repression of natural feelings, but by raising them to the highest heights of which they are capable. This does not mean that human love is to be scorned or denied its rights. But unless the soul obtains, through the agency of religion, control of the body, there is always the danger of degrading human love to the level of being a slave of the senses instead of giving it an opportunity to raise man to higher heights. Just as flowers need the sun to develop their full beauty, so human love does not blossom forth in all its richness and perfection unless subject to religious influences. But, under the influence of religion, the feelings and forms of human love, instead of remaining the mere expression of an animal instinct, become the signs and symbols of a higher love. This explanation is necessary since there are many who believe that spiritual religion impoverishes the affections.

Msgr. Robert Hugh Benson corrects this erroneous impression: "We do not rise to our full spiritual stature by eradicating passions. The ideal man is not a passionless man. He is rather one whose passions are turned into the right channel. The ideally pure man is not the sexless man; he is the man who loves violently what he ought, as he ought." Mr. Chesterton brings out the same truth in fewer words: "Chastity does not mean abstention from sexual wrong; it means something flaming, like Joan of Arc."

POSITIVE VALUES AND NOT MERE PROHIBITIONS

To call forth the best, we must give the best. There is no age period so responsive to the best influence as that of adolescence, and it is during this critical period that we must be on the alert to give to youth the proper ideals to direct their sex life. It is the time, not for multiplying prohibitions, but for offering positive values. Adolescents reject prohibitions as interfering with their liberty and as interfering with the evaluation that they have made of their own personality. But if, instead of irksome prohibitions of wrong-doing, we present to them temptations to right-doing, positive values, ideals for satisfying that vague urge of theirs, we shall find them pursuing the ideals with all the ardor of their youthful enthusiasm. Consequently, we should not say to the young: Woe to those who abuse themselves, or who associate with vile women, or who practice impurity in whatever form, who use smutty language, or who read immoral books. Let us rather say to them: Keep clean your bodies and your souls; do not cast aside the eternal jewel of your soul; do not do anything that would let you forfeit your self-respect; let every woman be sacred in your eyes; look upon every woman and every girl as a sister of the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of God and the mother of purity. St. Paul employed the sublimation appeal effectively: "This is the will of God, your sanctification; that you should abstain from fornication; that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor. . . . Know you not that your bodies are the members of Christ? . . . Know you not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, Who is in you, Whom you have from God; and you are not your own. For you are bought with a great price. Glorify and bear God in your body."[2]

Chastity of thought and action, chivalry towards the other sex, willingness to make sacrifices, voluntary giving up of pleasures, the high resolve to make honor the touchstone of all action so that the youth may never lose the respect of himself—such are the ideals that may inspire boys of thirteen and fourteen. Boys of that age are not yet mature enough to understand elaborate argumentation; they rebel against mere prohibitions; and their sex instinct is vaguely converging towards ideals of chivalry; and hence we had best keep from them any direct sex interests. Knowledge of the danger of venereal infection, if overstressed, would likewise produce only mental conflict without offering any positive help; and hence we shall best train them for reverence by giving them noble ideals of womanhood.

Young people are never deaf to an appeal to the heroic phase of their character. They are more than ready to receive Nietzsche's message: "Do not cast aside the heroic in thy soul." What opportunity for sublimating do they not present to the educator who has the eyes to see in them what Cardinal Newman saw in the young: "Generosity and lightness of heart and amiableness, the confiding spirit, the gentle temper, the elastic cheerfulness, the open hand, the pure affection, the noble aspiration, the heroic resolve, the romantic pursuit, and the love in which self has no part."

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[2] I Thess. IV, 3-4: I Cor. VI, 15 and 19.

Edwin D. Starbuck offers sound advice:[3] "Approach the sex question usually from above rather than from below, that is, from ideal considerations rather than from a practical or materialistic viewpoint. . . . My own conviction is that the conduct of most of us, particularly that of children, is the outgrowth of admirations and idealisms and drives of one sort or another rather than the result of sets of clear ideas."

What should we therefore do? We should help parents and teachers find such novels as Crawford's *Mr. Isaacs, a Tale of India*, or Mrs. Norman's *The Town on the Hill*, poetry like that of Longfellow's, music with the irresistible passion of Schumann's *Widmung*, paintings of the Madonnas, sculpture with the soul of Michelangelo's *Pietà*, and architecture with the theme of Taj Mahal. We should try to help them to feel the joy of the spirit of knight errantry so that the spirit of chivalry would come again into its own. These are only scrappy hints of what we should try to do.

Poetry is a much neglected field. Poetry appeals to the normal adolescent and, properly introduced to him, it should be the source of fine ideals. Here is a list of Catholic poetry read by high school seniors as revealed by their notebooks: Dante: *La Vita Nuova; The Divine Comedy;* R. H. Benson: *Fulfillment;* G. K. Chesterton: *Lepanto;* L. I. Guiney: *The Wild Ride;* Joyce Kilmer: *Trees and Other Poems;* Alice Meynell: *Thoughts in Separation; Mary, the Mother of Jesus;* Cardinal Newman: *The Dream of Gerontius;* Coventry Patmore: *Toys;* Francis Thompson: *The Hound of Heaven; Ex Ore Infantium.*

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[3] *Journal of Social Hygiene*, March, 1927, pp. 184-185.

There are heroes in poetry who will recall to the boy the ideal of Sir Galahad:

> My strong blade carves the casks of men:
>   My stiff lance thrusteth sure.
> My strength is as the strength of ten,
>   Because my heart is pure.

The pure man is undoubtedly the strongest. If we would equip the youth for the battle against the allurements of sex, we must build up his whole nature. All the faculties and powers must be developed into a symmetrical whole, and each power must be properly co-ordinated and subordinated. The creation of ideals plays no small rôle in this endeavor. It is only such ideals as satisfy the whole man that will arouse to the utmost all his powers to co-operate in the striving for chastity. More than a hundred years ago Jais remarked that it is joylessness and ennui that drive the young into vice. Psychoanalysis and psychology in general confirm this judgment. Hence the need for soul-filling and soul-satisfying ideals and activities.

It is therefore obviously a mistake to drag the sensual phase of sex into the light of day, for to do so is to fasten upon it the lewdness of youth. Dr. Edward L. Keyes admits that this mistake was made by some of the pioneers in the sex education movement:

> This reproof was indeed sharply merited by the lack of idealism in much of what used to pass for sex education. But we have learned to distinguish the child from the adult: the child who needs to be stimulated by idealism; the adult whose interest must often be aroused by shocking pathologic detail.[4]

Factors in the Teaching of Ideals

Dr. Charters has done well in studying the factors that enter into the teaching of ideals.[5] The first step is to create the desire for the ideal. In the case of the Prodigal Son, ideals were created by a tragic disaster. In the case of many a vocation to the priesthood, the first thought was given by a teacher who asked the boy whether he would not wish to be like Father X. History records how many great men were first stirred in their boyhood by the reading of Plutarch's *Lives*. Hence the reason for so presenting the saints' lives that they make a *real* appeal to the respective child.*

The second step is to diagnose the concrete situation. We must find the reason for the weak trait of personality or the undesirable outlook. It may not be easy to discover the precise cause: "When we search for the hidden springs of ideals, we are led back into a most complex field. Ideals are the visible tops of the submerged continents of instincts, emotions, and habits which run down into early childhood and ancestry.''

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[4] "Morals and Venereal Disease," in: *Social Hygiene*, Jan., 1916, p. 50.

[5] "Five Factors in the Teaching of Ideals," in: *The Elementary School Journal*, Dec., 1924, pp. 264-276.

* Cf. *supra*, pp. 394 ff.

With a few individuals it will be sufficient to arouse the desire, but with the average child, it will be necessary to indicate a plan of action. The suggestions offered above on page 253, with regard to considering our struggles with the passions in the light of a prize fight, will indicate a method of procedure with boys and young men.

After the plan of action has been outlined, it will be necessary to require practice. Repeated acts are necessary to form a habit. It will be well to remember that no one will practice an ideal unless it gives him satisfaction. This satisfaction may be internal, and may consist merely in the satisfaction of complying with one's duty, or of making progress, or of removing a handicap in the upward struggle. Frequently, however, the reward must come from the outside. Charters illustrates discipline by the story of the rigorous mother who telephoned her daughter during a party and made her come to straighten up her room. Needless to say, this lesson impressed the necessity of neatness indelibly on the girl's mind.

The last factor is that of generalizing ideals. Children may be enthusiastic about cleaning up yards and alleys, and lack neatness in the classroom.

Much can be done in this way to develop personality. True, nature sets limits; but these limits are sufficiently wide. While the incidental method of teaching ideals may be the best, it is at least necessary to know what ideals are to be developed at the various age levels, otherwise they may be neglected. It will be helpful to bear in mind the characteristics of the periods of human development. Dr. Ralph Pringle has outlined the following scheme for the chief periods of human development with the respective characteristics:

1. Babyhood (0-2 years): instinct;
2. Childhood (2-7): imitation;
3. Pre-adolescence (8-12): physical activity;
4. Early adolescence (13-15): awkwardness;
5. Middle adolescence (14-18): idealism;
6. Late adolescence (17-24): co-operation.

It should be noted that girls enter each stage about one and one-half years earlier than boys.

To teach ideals, we must create an atmosphere of idealism. And our young people are, notwithstanding the superficial appearances to the contrary, deep down in their hearts eager to remain chaste. By appealing to what Herbart calls the heroic emotions in the nature of our young people, we can accomplish much more than by censuring and prohibiting. The young can never lose altogether that nobility of soul that is theirs because of their being made to the image of God, particularly after this image has been hallowed by sacramental grace.

Keeping in mind these facts, our priests, parents, and teachers will discover a new meaning in Wordsworth's *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*:

> Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
>   The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
> Hath elsewhere had its setting,
>   And cometh from afar,
>   Not in entire forgetfulness,
>   And not in utter nakedness,

But trailing clouds of glory do we come,
  From God, Who is our home.
Heaven lies about us in our infancy;
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
  Upon the growing boy;
But he beholds the light and whence it flows,
  He sees it in his joy:
The youth, who, daily, farther from the east
Must travel, still is nature's priest,
  And by the vision splendid
  Is on his way attended:
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

When this light of the common day, in the form of impurity, begins to destroy the bright vision of the young, they are depressed. The sin of impurity weighs upon them like a load that inhibits joy and kills interest in life. And by contrast what a relief when they can shake off the weary burden in holy Confession and enjoy again the "vision splendid"!

The Church has in her keeping a wondrous power over the young in that she can inspire enthusiasm of the highest order. She gives to the youth a consciousness of his royal dignity by bringing home to him his position as the favored child of God, and proposes to him tasks that are worthy of his sublime destiny and that are a challenge to his most earnest striving.

What boy or girl would not glow with holy pride if properly instructed about being grafted upon "the good olive tree,"[6] or being made a fruit-bearing branch of the Vine which is Christ,[7] a living member of the mystical Body of the God-Man! By this association the boy and girl enter into a most intimate union not only with Christ the Head,[8] but also with all other members of the Church Triumphant, Suffering, and Militant.[9] Here is material for appeals that will support the young in many a battle.

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[6] Rom. XI, 17, 24.

[7] John XV. 1.

Also, why do we so often neglect the power of the appeal that lies in holding forth to our young people the aureola of virginity? Even in our preparatory seminaries our boys have only very vague notions about what is implied in virginity. Catholic moralists teach that man loses his physical virginity by voluntary co-operation in seminal emission. A woman loses her physical virginity by voluntary sex intercourse. Either may lose moral virginity by freely consenting to an unchaste act. This distinction forms the basis of the liturgical classification of saints and their cult. If penitents are depressed by the thought that the loss of virginity is irreparable, they should be told that whatever is lost by sin may be regained by penance. A woman who has sinned may still aim at the highest rank. If she attains great sanctity and is canonized, she would be classed with the virgins. The same holds with men. By conversion the sinner cannot regain physical integrity of the flesh, but can acquire moral virginity. When corruption shall put on incorruption, no taint shall remain of the sin.[10] Many a boy and girl, if instructed betimes, will strive to carry their virginity to the Throne of God, to wear the aureola, and to sing forever the canticle that only virgins sing.

We shall make no mistake in stressing supernatural motives while we are striving to build up ideals. The Notre Dame University Religious Survey of 1925-26 contained the following request: [11]

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[8] Eph. I, 24.

[9] I Cor. XII, 21ff.

[10] Cf. Ballerini-Palmieri, *Opus theologicum morale*, Vol. II, Par. 142. Prato, 1890; Leonard Lessius, S.J., *De justitia et jure*, Antwerp, 1612, Lib. IV, 2.

> *Rate the following influences on your character: athletics, discipline, Confession, Holy Communion, priests, religious instruction, companions, spiritual reading, secular reading, parents, spiritual advice.*

With an exact mathematical evaluation given to each answer, including those which disregarded some of the twelve factors, the rating is as follows:

1. Holy Communion.
2. Parents.
3. Confession.
4. Companions.
5. Priests.
6. Religious instruction.
7. Discipline.
8. Athletics.
9. Spiritual advice.
10. Sacrifice.
11. Spiritual reading.
12. Secular reading.

According to the *number of ratings* received, disregarding what the rating was, the following results are obtained:

Actual Number of Ratings

	Number	Place
Athletics	485	5
Discipline	445	7
Confession	568	3
Holy Communion	681	1
Priests	471	6
Companions	564	4
Spiritual reading	346	11
Religious instruction	444	8
Secular reading	343	12
Sacrifice	372	10
Parents	669	2
Spiritual advice	420	9

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[11] *Official Bulletin of the University of Notre Dame*, Oct., 1926, p. 120.

These findings prove conclusively that spiritual factors and parental influence are paramount in building up those defenses of character that are essential for the preservation of chastity. The Rev. Dr. John M. Cooper has well said:

> The key-strategy of education in purity may be summed up in a sentence. Develop the constructive forces in the race-preservation complex at the expense of the destructive ones. We have not merely to repress and control. We have not merely to inhibit, starve and strangle the unlovely spawn of misdirected forces in the complex—and God knows there are enough such without our going into them in detail. It is equally imperative, perhaps even more so, to stimulate, to nurture, to develop positively the good constructive forces in the complex. Thus we make an ally of our instinctive nature instead of an enemy.[12]

Making Allies of Our Instincts

It is all important that we make allies of this instinctive nature. The inherited human instincts are, as Dr. Cooper observes, the raw material from which the educational loom weaves its finished products. But the instincts are more than passive raw material. They are active, dynamic psychic forces which drive us through life. They are the primary inherited driving power in the human make-up. Habit, reason, and grace modify, speed up, direct, and steer their course for better or for worse, but this inherited driving force of instinct abides with us through life until death do us part from this vale of tears.

What would result if we deprived the young of those manhood-building (or womanhood-building) hormones which the reproductive glands are pouring into the blood? We should have neither man nor woman, but a neuter. Sex in human life is a creative force which has marvelous capacity for upbuilding and enrichment. But it must not be forgotten that it has equal capacity for degradation and brutishness. Sex is a very personal quality, with extraordinary subtle implications; and its discipline, like that of the religious emotions, is to be sought along the lines of indirect, as well as direct, culture.

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[12] *Sex Education in the Home*, Washington, D. C., 1921, p. 22.

It has been suggested that we can refine or sublimate the sex impulses and combine them with others in such a way as to modify them permanently. This should be done, however, in a way to please and satisfy the child. We may, for instance, when answering the child's questions as to where babies come from, give the information in such a way that the purpose and meaning of motherhood stands out in the boy's mind as a fine and happy thing. Motherhood is sex expression at its best. Or we may refine the grosser sex desires by getting a youth to think of the love and chivalrous devotion and high honor that he gives to his first sweetheart as among the greatest of his joys. It is very well possible for a young man to get happiness by controlling his physical sex urge for the sake of his future wife instead of gratifying it on a self-indulgent, sinful plane. It is likewise possible to combine the sex impulses with others which automatically absorb them in some degree. For example, a strong ambition, or a high sense of honor, but especially a religious purpose in life may combine with and perfect the sex urge. In this combination, control is conceived by the individual as a positive advantage and thus gives pleasure and becomes habitual.[13]

We should not overlook the higher feelings that are bound up with the sex instinct, because these can be well employed in controlling the animal part. Professor Foerster reminds us that the sexual development is a process of expansion. The process of growth, with its ego-centric desires and feelings, is supplemented by a development that aims to fit the organism for the service of the race and to train it to a dedication of its spare strength. Parallel to this growth and development we find a tremendous increase in the power of self-sacrifice and a stimulation of altruistic tendencies, while the capacity for self-control is aroused. The very same process which carries with it the greatest dangers for the path of youth contains within itself the seeds of the most powerful safeguards against these very dangers. The wise educator will make use of this fact.

Foster the good results of sex, and much of the bad will atrophy of itself. What is helpful in this regard is the fact that the first impulse of the awakening sex instinct is not for sensual gratification but for chivalrous devotion and service. The chivalrous tendencies of boyhood are among the most valuable assets of the educator. Hence the youth must be encouraged to assume toward women and girls the attitude of service and protection. Instead of being allowed to indulge in selfish and sinful sex gratification, he should be given high ideals of chivalry with regard to womanhood.

Foerster believes that the youthful sex instinct directs itself in the beginning not so much towards

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[13] Cf. T. W. Galloway, *Biology of Sex*, New York, 1922, pp. 27-28.

"the actual feminine" as towards "the eternal feminine." The teacher should therefore employ the higher feelings that come into being with puberty, to counteract brutality and other lower tendencies. He will discover that it is often simply a question of a few well-chosen words to draw out the latent chivalry and help the boy appreciate its value. Father Nicholas Dillon, O.F.M., has made a happy selection of *Maxims of Chivalry* from Kenelm Digby's *The Broad Stone of Honour*.[14] Let the teacher introduce the subject by asking: What is perfect chivalry? The discussion following upon this question would be a means of bringing out the youthful desire for heroic perfection and consistency.

Boys should learn that true chivalry consists in protecting a woman against the consequences of her own coquetry and thoughtlessness rather than in taking advantage of her frailty. Habits of chivalry must also be developed by an education which encourages not only girls but also boys to take part in all sorts of practical helpful work. The boys should be trained to be chivalrous to girls not only in externals, but also in the deeper sense. They should learn to appreciate the symbolical significance of politeness towards women, for thus they will acquire the proper mental attitude that is far-reaching in its consequences.

Trained in this way, the boy may often preserve a girl from a fall. And the girl, on her part, with high ideals of pure manhood, will not stoop to coquetry or pandering to the lower nature of the boy. It is here where the ideals of the Blessed Virgin and of one's own mother are most helpful. Devotion to Our Lady has aided many a young man in making a silly girl behave, in protecting her against the consequences of her own foolishness.[15]

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[14] New York, 1926.

The thought of mother, if properly presented, may prove a safeguard to a boy for his whole life. Father Martindale tells of the almost incredible example of a man who, from the backwoods, had been in military service at Melbourne, Cairo, Alexandria, Marseilles, and London, and had had every opportunity of wrong-doing, and not once had he offended. He insisted that he had always said to himself, "What would my mother say if she saw me doing so and so?"

Next to religion, it is the proper regard for woman that will be a man's best protection. A chaplain who served a full term in the World War said: "Because I was amazed to see many young men, of no settled religious convictions, leading decent—yes, noble—lives in the midst of grievous temptations, I was moved to make a quiet investigation of the reason for this. Every time I found that a woman was at the bottom of it. And in many cases, when that woman was not the mother, she was a teacher." A teacher, in commenting on this statement, added: "Is it not the better part of our reward to make impressions on souls like that—even, in a lifetime, on one soul like that? This is our opportunity, this is our reward: To have part in fashioning the souls of men and women who will one day take the place of those we now revere—leaders of state; healers of the sick; interpreters of the law, both human and divine; scholars through whose research shall come new light to brighten and to bless the paths of others yet unborn."

The thoughts that absorb the young will also mold them. Give them a proper conception of the other sex, and they will find self-control less of a problem. Our young people should be made to realize that it is not wrong to have the sex instinct, and they should not think themselves rotters for having it. It is not wrong for a young man to find women attractive, or for a girl to find the company of boys quite pleasant. It would be disastrous if they should be permitted to acquire a naturalistic and animal conception of sex. August Comte stigmatized as veterinarians those physicians who judge the effects of human acts from their reaction on the animal man, abstracting from their psychic reactions.

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[15] For student papers regarding experiences of this sort see the *Grail*, Feb., 1927, and the *Magnificat*, May, 1928.

Adolescents will experience soon enough the brutalizing tendencies of the sex instinct, and a low conception of sex would only aggravate this trend. The knowledge of sex is, as it were, only the metal that must be impressed with a design before it receives its final form. We must be on the alert lest the impression on the metal reveal a nude Venus instead of a beautiful image of the Madonna. Hence, it is imperative that parents and teachers steal a march on the seducer, and forestall his attempt to vulgarize forever after the subconscious mind with regard to sex. Sex is intrinsically pure, and efforts should be made to keep it free in the child's mind from the slime of the serpent. It was Thoreau who said: "For him to whom sex is impure there are no flowers in nature." The first impressions are here, as in all other matters, the most lasting and therefore the most important. The first impression may endure for one's whole life.

Let the first impression be in keeping with what the Church teaches on the subject. The Church gives a truly sublime conception of the generative power. The generative power is really a partaking of the creative power of the Almighty. The work of a master is the more perfect the more it does away with his need of further interference. Hence the generative power is sacred. God entrusts this power to man, trusting that he will not abuse the sacred trust. Great evil may result from an abuse of the sacred trust. The parents share in the creative power of God, and consequently the child is in duty bound to give to them, for the sake of God, reverence, love, and obedience.

Boys especially must be trained to esteem the unselfish elements of love instead of what is selfish and self-centered companionship. If trained thus, they will not seek immediate sense gratification, but will cultivate the higher aspects of sex relations. And girls must have their eyes opened to the appreciation of true values so that they will never say, "I want a man with a past." Father Martindale illustrates the false ideals that prevail quite often among the young:

> "You don't understand what life *is*, till you've tried so and so. You're green. You aren't a proper man yet. Give me a man who has had experience, and *then* he can talk if he wants to." This is a galling thing to have said to one. No man likes to feel a fool in life, and inexperienced. And it is quite true that keeping one's self chaste involves the sacrifice of one experience. Of *one* experience. But it means the gaining of a better experience. If I am never ill, I miss the (maybe very valuable) experience of feeling ill. All the same, it is better to experience good health! Sexual pleasure is a short shock to the nerves, and has often a bad reaction after it, especially in the conscience. But to control yourself carries with it the experience of self-possession, that is, of being

> fully a man; and this is enduring, constructive, and pervades the "self" and is not in the nerves merely. It brings no swing-back, but goes on increasing. It is a glow, not a flash; it is like the good all-through-you warmth after exercise, not like suddenly being scorched! And you have the experience of happiness, not of mere pleasure. So if you are told: "You are an inexperienced kid; don't dare to talk among men," you have the right to answer: "I agree I have sacrificed an experience, but I have also gained one. And so have you. But the one I have gained is a better one than the one you have. I have got nearer to manhood; you, to animal-hood." [16]

Father Martindale's reference to the difference between pleasure and happiness may remind us of the duty of giving to our charges a clear idea of what happiness is. Pleasure may be got through impurity, but never joy or happiness. Happiness is pleasure without regrets or remorse. St. Augustine gives us in his *Confessions* a classic description of the soul hungry for the happiness of true love, and trying in vain to satisfy that hunger with the husks of sensual love:

> To Carthage I came, where there sang all around me in my ears a cauldron of unholy loves. I loved not yet, yet I loved to love, and out of a deep-seated want, I hated myself for wanting not. I sought what I might love, in love with loving, and safety I hated, and a way without snares. For within me there was a famine of that inward food, Thyself, my God; yet, through that famine I was not hungered; but was without all longing for incorruptible sustenance, not because filled therewith, but the more empty, the more I loathed it. For this cause my soul was sickly and full of sores; it miserably cast itself forth, desiring to be scraped by the touch of the objects of sense. Yet if these had not a soul, they would

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[16] *The Difficult Commandment*, New York, 1927.

> not be objects of love. To love then, and to be beloved, was sweet to me; but more when I obtained to enjoy the person I loved. I defiled, therefore, the spring of friendship with the filth of concupiscence, and I beclouded its brightness with the hell of lustfulness; and thus fouled and unseemly, I would fain, through exceeding vanity, be fine and courtly. I fell headlong then into the love wherein I longed to be ensnared. My God, my Mercy, with how much gall didst Thou out of Thy great goodness besprinkle for me that sweetness! For I was both beloved and secretly arrived at the bond of enjoying; and was with joy fettered with sorrow-bringing bonds, that I might be scourged with the iron-burning rods of jealousy, and suspicions, and fears, and angers, and quarrels.[17]

In our day it is all the more necessary to represent the ideal and true aspect of sex because of the modern tendency to keep the pleasure and eliminate the creative power of sex. The moderns want the pleasure without the purpose. Hence sex has become an unimportant thing or a frivolous thing. What modern looks upon sex as sharing in that creative power of God to people this world with children beloved of God and destined by God to lead an immortal life? No man can love nobly if he has not lived a noble life, and to live a noble life, he must have pure and noble ideas of that important factor in human life—the generative power.

Given the proper ideals of sex, there will follow spontaneously a certain "tone." Given this "tone," the young will be protected by the tradition that certain things are simply not done. At Taunton, an English public school, there exists a tradition that every Taunton boy is a gentleman and must act as such. Part of his code of gentlemanliness is not to use bad language and not to smoke—and why? Simply because the traditional tone of the school forbids the first, and an express rule forbids the second. If any youngster is found infringing this code, it is not necessary for the staff to intervene. The sixth-form—who are the monitors—simply take the matter in their own hands in a constitutional way, and give the youth a sound thrashing, or condemn him to run the gauntlet—to teach him that "if he wants to be a Taunton boy he must learn to behave like one." We realize what a protection such a tradition would be for a new boy.

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[17] Pusey's translation, London, 1909, pp. 46-47.

Mr. Burton Confrey speaks of the impression gained by a new student when he was confronted with a similar tradition against vulgarity prevailing among the boys at Notre Dame University. It was the boy's first meal in the refectory. A student made a vulgar remark and laughed, thinking he had cracked a joke. Every other boy at the table except the new student, "jumped him"—vigorously and seriously. He tried to laugh that off and the head of the table gave him orders: "One more crack like that out of you and we'll find you a place where you can eat out of a trough." That settled the incident. It made a very good first impression.[18]

But, alas! so high a moral tone is not at all common to-day. The Church and the school may be inculcating sublime ideals, may demand self-control and chastity in word and deed, and outside the Church and the school, nay, perhaps even at home the youth will witness the grossest immorality. He will even be ridiculed for his attempts to remain chaste. He will hear and read that what the Church and the Catholic school insist upon is a remnant of a bygone age when people were priest-ridden, superstitious, ignorant, or lacked the opportunity for "enjoying life." These contradictory standards will prove a dreadful temptation. But they are all too common to-day, and hence we must train the youth, if we wish him to remain chaste amid a hostile environment, to stand on his own two feet, to recognize no authority except that of his own conscience and the representatives of God. He must be trained to brave the jeers of the crowd, to be *not only a man in the world but a man against the world.* He must be brought to realize that one with God is a majority. He must be trained not to be afraid to be different. He must strive to be not common, but uncommon, for in an environment without high moral tone common life will make common characters. He must learn to say "yes" to the crowd so long as his conscience permits, and to say "no" quite emphatically whenever his conscience says "nay."

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[18] "A Practical Method of Training for Character," in: *Catholic Educational Review*, Oct., 1929, p. 455.

In this way the boy will develop a sense of personal honor. And the sense of honor is a strong asset in fighting the dangers of immorality. There is deep educational significance to the title of Schiller's essay, *The Man Who Was a Criminal because He Had Lost His Sense of Honor*; and among adolescents, particularly, a sense of honor may prove one of the foundation stones of chastity. Priests and teachers engaged in the movement for a better world in the next generation can ill afford to neglect the aid to be derived from developing a fine sense of honor among our boys and girls.

AESTHETIC EDUCATION

In connection with training our young people to take an idealistic view of sex matters, we may properly bring up the subject of aesthetic education. There should be no doubt of the need of training our children to appreciate art while we keep in mind the ulterior aim of protecting their souls. Such protection is needed. Immoral pictures are displayed everywhere—billboards, newspapers, magazines flaunt them everywhere. Nude statues are numerous in our parks and public places, and galleries and museums are open to children at all times. Therefore our object in taking up aesthetic education should be not only to teach children carefully to guard their eyes, but also to habituate them to a horror of ugliness as of evil, and to a love of the beautiful as well as of the good. Of course, we are not advocating such a course in aesthetics as would include a study of the nude. But we are advocating a course that would explain *clearly* what is forbidden in the way of looks.[19]

To develop the aesthetic sense it will be necessary to begin with very young children by drawing their attention to the beauties of nature and to what is beautiful in religious art. The teachers of the lower grades can do much in this direction to train the eyes of the children for an appreciation of what is truly beautiful. Later, when they are more mature, they should be trained to see in the purest masterpieces of religious or profane art something else than the glorification of the flesh. If we neglect this aesthetic education, even adults may regard the masterpieces of art as immoral. And with adolescents in particular the fear of the nude may become an obsession so that they will feel themselves guilty of a mortal sin because of a chance look at a nude statue. Hence Father Vermeersch pleads strongly for a course in aesthetic education,[20] and Fathers Gillet and Ross recommend it since such a course would seem to safeguard many of our people against vain scruples, and, what is more important, against the instinctive tendency to seek after "forbidden fruit." [21]

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[19] Cf. Vermeersch, *De castitate*, Rome, 1919, pp. 180-183, 241, 397ff.

A further reason for this training in aesthetics is given by Dr. Maurice A. Bigelow:

> For the normal young man there is sure to be more or less consciousness of emotions stimulated by the beautiful associated with women, but the individual man may train himself to turn such emotions into aesthetic or psychical lines instead of into those which are sensual, animalistic, or physical. In this connection, I have long been of the opinion that training in art appreciation, especially of sculpture, may help many men to an aesthetic attitude toward the human form.[22]

The reader will recognize the obvious limitations of this theory, and he will see how such principles have been employed at times to expose children, as Pope Pius XI says, to dangerous "occasions, in order to accustom them, so it is argued, and as it were to harden them against such dangers."

With regard to books and periodicals, it would likewise help if priests, parents, and teachers would make systematic efforts to train children to appraise literature properly. The discussion conducted in

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[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 185-186.

[21] *Innocence and Ignorance*, New York, 1917, pp. 188-190.

[22] *Sex Education*, New York, 1924, p. 175.

America during the Fall of 1929 produced plentiful evidence of the crude opinions that are current on this matter even among our educated Catholics. A proper cultivation of taste should safeguard our people against much of the filth that comes off the press in our day, and it will also render them capable of appreciating literature that deals properly and artistically with realities.

One hour's bad reading may undo the work of years. Here again the positive method is the best. Habituate the young to read worth-while books. History and biography appeal to the normal adolescent and should form a large part of his reading. It is surprising how deep is the influence that a biography may exert. One boy copied from Goethe the practice of taking a walk at one o'clock in the morning. Another boy copied from William Penn the practice of not removing his hat at table or at school, because his hero would not remove his hat in assemblies.

In her chapter on "Spiritual Benefits of Reading,"[23] Sister Mary Antonina, S.D.P., has assembled much evidence to prove that our adolescents are interested in proper reading. The fact that 80 per cent of the boys and 93 per cent of the girls declare that reading is a spiritual benefit to them should be an incentive to us to utilize to the fullest extent this means of reinforcing religious and moral training. Moreover, since pupils report various types of reading as being helpful, Sister Mary Antonina rightly assumes that enjoyment in reading, discrimination in taste, and the habit of reading the best are much more likely to be cultivated through furnishing a variety of interests than by imposing too didactic a type.

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[23] In: *Religious Instruction in the Catholic High School*, Washington, D. C., 1930, pp. 57-75.

Our principle with regard to books for the young must be: Only the best is good enough. Because of the idealism that is hidden beneath the blunt exterior of our young people, they will take interest in saints' lives, provided the latter are written truthfully, i.e., represent the friends of God as beings of flesh and blood.[24] Proper encouragement on the part of their elders will induce boys and girls to read worthwhile books. At the religious survey conducted at Notre Dame University in 1927 the students listed among the "most profitable" books the following in this order: *You and Yours, Quo Vadis,* the Bible, *Life of Christ* (no author), *Life of Christ* (Papini), *Fabiola, Ben Hur, The Church and Science* (Windle), *Ideals of Youth* (an address by Bishop Spalding), and *Neglect of Divine Warnings* (a sermon by Newman). The same survey brought out that religious pamphlets were distributed at the University through a book rack at the rate of 3,000 a month. Current light literature has injured their ideals "much," say 39 students; "somewhat," say 33; "little," say 179; and "none," say 306. It may well be that this last group of 306 students do not realize how the poison of secularism has been seeping from the current literature into their souls.

Here a word of warning to priests, parents, and teachers to keep their eyes open with regard to the literature that may be distributed or peddled to children on their way from school, or even at the very doors of the school. Several priests have reported on the filthy literature and vile pictures forced upon the attention of young children. The situation is said to be worse to-day than ever before, because of new publications constantly appearing on the market and the easier distribution, and the traffic in obscenity is said to be practically without hindrance.*

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[24] Cf. *supra*, p. 398.

We can hardly be too cautious in selecting the reading for the young. The Catholic authorship of a book is not sufficient guarantee of its wholesomeness for the young. There is more than one novel written by Catholics that idealizes illicit love, and an American Catholic writer has written novels that idealize paganism. In a certain Catholic boarding school the boys of gang age were barred from reading Cooper, but were permitted to revel in the novels of a Catholic writer that reeked with sentimentality and wishy-washy "love."

The life of St. Augustine offers evidence of what can be accomplished by one good book given to a boy. It is significant that the book dealt with the ideals that make so strong an appeal to the adolescent. St. Augustine's account contains an obvious lesson for all who deal with adolescents:

> In the ordinary course of study, I fell upon a certain book of Cicero, whose speech almost all admire, not so his heart. This book of his contains an exhortation to philosophy, and is called *Hortensius*. But this book altered my affections, and turned my prayers to Thyself, O Lord; and made me have other purposes and desires. Every vain hope at once became worthless to me; and I longed with an incredibly burning desire for an immortality of wisdom, and began now to arise, that I might return to Thee.[25]

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* Cf. *supra*, p. 4.

[25] *Confessions* (Pusey's translation), London, 1909, pp. 51-52.

CHAPTER XVIII

EDUCATION FOR CATHOLIC MARRIAGE

The necessity of calling the attention of Christian families to the duty of preparing their children for the married life was one of the principal themes of the Catholic section of the National Birth-Rate Congress which held its eighth annual meeting in Paris in October, 1926. The clergy were called upon to help parents fulfill their duties in this respect and also to study, within the limits of the necessary prudence and discretion, the means of facilitating marriages between Christian young men and women. The members of the Catholic section were all in accord on these resolutions.

The reporters of the Catholic section were priests, directors of Catholic associations, physicians, professors, and social workers. With one accord they pointed out that young people to-day marry with insufficient knowledge of their duties, and declared that the activity of parents in this respect must be greatly improved. If the parents do not do their duty in this respect, then the clergy must substitute for them as far as possible. It was admitted that all too frequently the negligence of parents is due to ignorance. Hence the necessity of enlightening parents by means of books and pamphlets, sermons, meetings of mothers' clubs, and "family days."

It was observed that among the masses, even in Christian families, marriages are contracted which offer no guarantee whatsoever of security. A campaign was to be undertaken to arouse the clergy and Catholic opinion in order to prevent, by every possible means, the contracting of unfortunate marriages which, at one blow, threaten to destroy the virtues of pious Christian youth.

In these recommendations the French Congress did not go beyond the regulation laid down by the Code of Canon Law:[1] "*Parochus ne omittat populum prudenter erudire de matrimonio ejusque impedimentis*"; "let the Pastor not fail to instruct his people prudently about matrimony and the matrimonial impediments." Now, "instruct" here means more than elementary instruction; it does not mean merely the hurried and perfunctory *instructio sponsorum* on the eve of the marriage. It is not sufficient to bring up the subject in mission sermons, or in the Lenten course of conferences. These means have been tried and have not proved adequate. Consequently we submitted the following question to 500 pastors: *What means would you suggest as helpful in educating our young people to have clear and adequate knowledge of, and training for, Catholic Marriage?* The replies received from 460 pastors have been classified into five groups and tabulated as follows, along with the number of mentions:

A. In the Confessional

Question married penitents about fulfillment of family obligations	310
Make sure that penitent realizes seriousness of sin of birth-control	299
Instruct penitents on possibility and advisability of practicing restraint in marriage	280

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[1] Canon 1018.

Teach the difference of the sex instinct in men and women 172

Make sure of disposition of penitent guilty of birth-control before you give absolution 160

B. In the Pulpit (Sermons or Conferences for Special Groups)

Preach Catholic doctrine of self-denial in season and out of season 311

Expose the fallacy that birth-control is forbidden merely by the Church, or by a man-made law, and not by natural law, or that the infallible Church will ever modify her teaching on the subject...... 270

Make plain to young people that God's law on morality has not changed with the large freedom now obtaining between the sexes 220

Make plain that advice given in the confessional is individual advice and should not be applied generally or indiscriminately 205

Warn people about quoting and especially about misquoting their confessor 201

Insist on safeguards during time of courtship 198

Be specific in warnings and instructions about dangers of courtship 190

Be sympathetic in preaching on birth-control, and show that you are conversant with all economic factors that encourage the practice; but insist nevertheless on obedience to God's law 189

Expose the un-Christian attitude of insisting on too high a standard of living 180

Use pulpit and Catholic literature to bring out honor of Catholic motherhood 172

Explain sinfulness of giving immoral advice to married couples 160

An annual course of sermons on Matrimony 155

Insist on duty of reading Catholic literature and of

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keeping away from literature favoring birth-control 150

Expose false notions about the vulgarity of having a large family 140

C. Private Instruction

Make certain that young people marrying are fully instructed about their rights and duties 349

Do not marry any couple until you have made sure that both have read and understood some good Catholic book on marriage. 98

Encourage the practice of voluntary and mutual offering of health certificates before marriage 87

D. In the School

Train children to practice self-denial 290

Begin with general preparation for marriage in the high school 190

Bring out correct doctrine on vocation, even in elementary school 163

E. Miscellaneous

Stop propaganda of Catholic women in favor of birth-control 296

Encourage people to consult only such doctors as have correct ideas on Catholic marriage 289

Check up on practices recommended by doctors practicing in parish 264

Use influence to bring down costs of rent and other necessities 256

Expose dangerous and foolish practices of "keeping up with the Joneses" 240

Bring home by example and preaching the lesson of sacrifice 230

Have study clubs of Catholic women take up Catholic literature on birth-control 99

Priest's example of moderation in use of this world's goods 87

Bring up the matter at diocesan conferences and discuss advisability of concerted action by pastors, preachers, and confessors	69
Explain the danger of the wife's engaging in gainful occupation outside the home	61

These replies are significant in several ways. First of all, the unusually high percentage of replies—92 per cent—indicates that priests are widely interested in the problem. Secondly, the many and diversified replies demonstrate that the respondents have given much time and thought to the subject. Finally, the complexity of the problem is indicated by the wide ramifications of the measures that were recommended. We did not list such replies as involve causes that are beyond the scope of the present study, for example, the industrial revolution and the breaking up of the home, the exodus from the country to the city, and the like. Our concern is with those preventive or remedial measures that may be employed by the individual priest in charge of the cure of souls.

Many priests realize the urgent need of instruction on the primary purpose of marriage. One priest writes:

> The primary purpose of marriage is lost sight of by many of our people. In sermons addressed to the Society of the Christian Mothers or to the sodality of the married women as well as to the married members of the Holy Name Society, priests should bring out clearly the fact that procreation and rearing of children is the primary purpose of marriage, and that parents must make it plain to their sons and daughters about to marry that they must think of themselves as fathers and mothers and live as such if they wish to have Christ's idea of Matrimony.

Another priest criticizes certain kinds of preaching on marriage:

> What has done some harm is the entertaining or sensational style of sermon preached at times on the subject of courtship. The preacher is humorous and witty or sensational in describing courtship and the early days of married life, but his attitude does not bring out the sacredness of Matrimony. It may sound old-fashioned, but more would be gained if there were a general insistence on the practice of making a General Confession before receiving the Sacrament of Matrimony. In connection with the General Confession the young man and woman might be brought to realize that they are entering upon such a state of life as entails new obligations and demands real sacrifices from both husband and wife.

A third priest makes the charge of a sin of omission:

> We have probably made a mistake in our instructions on Matrimony in the past by insisting merely on rights and duties, without bringing out sufficiently the wise counsel of mutual restraint in sex indulgence. Continence is not so difficult as many imagine, and with the help of frequent Communion many would find it quite feasible. Husbands especially have much to learn here.

It is interesting to recall in connection with this suggestion what was the practice of the Church formerly in certain countries. We learn from the *Poenitentiale Ecclesiarum Germaniae*,[2] of the eleventh century, that the performance of the marriage act was prohibited for a period of 40 days before the birth of a child and for 40 to 50 days after the birth; the penance to be imposed for transgressing the law was fasting on bread and water for 20 days. The act

[2] J. Müller, "*Abusus matrimonii,*" in: *Theologisch-praktische Quartalschrift*, 1922. No. 1, pp. 111-112

was likewise prohibited for 20 days before Christmas and for 40 days before Easter; the penance for transgressing the law in these cases was fasting on bread and water for 40 days.

Those priests who believe that preachers have been remiss in dealing with the subject of marriage are supported in their view by the evidence collected by a priest who was more than fifty years old when he was ordained priest. This priest reports[3] that outside of missions and retreats he never heard a sermon on such subjects as Matrimony, birth control, company keeping, and bad language.

One priest brought out in his reply to our questionnaire the need of instructing our boys and girls of eighteen and nineteen: "These young people are thinking seriously of their vocations. Make plain to them what the vocation to the married state implies. Bring home the seriousness of the step. Talk plainly about the serious duties of husbands and wives, fathers and mothers. Bring home the doctrine of unselfishness and the Christian spirit of sacrifice."

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL?

The replies of other priests express the conviction of the writers that we are not availing ourselves of all the opportunity offered by the Catholic high school to give our young people some preparation for Catholic marriage. Miss Ellamay Horan published in *Thought*,[4] the results of her investigation as to what the Catholic High School should do for girls in this matter. We quote from her returns the more significant facts. We are not quoting the returns on such obvious needs as are implied by such items as the following: dangers of keeping company with a non-Catholic; when and how to be married—season, hour, service, place; dangers of going out with divorced men; delicacy in general conversation pertaining to marriage. However, despite the obviousness of these needs, it might be well for priests and other authorities to check up on how these subjects are being dealt with in our secondary schools. Here are the other judgments presented by Miss Horan:

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[3] *Acolyte*, Jan. 25, 1930, p. 3.

[4] Dec., 1928, p. 382.

Judgments of 518 persons on the advisability of preparing Catholic High School Students to meet certain life problems pertaining to marriage

Life Problems	Opinions of 68 priests			Opinions of 65 women of experience			Opinions of 300 Catholic high-school graduates			Opinions of 85 public high-school graduates		
	Yes	No	Can't say	Yes	No	Can't say	Yes	No	Can't say	Yes	No	Can't say
Origin, meaning, reproduction of life	54	9	5	56	3	3	257	25	18	72	7	6
How to make Catholic men friends	62	2	4	53	6	6	268	19	13	75	5	5
Nature and purpose of marriage	65	3	0	63	1	1	283	8	9	77	4	4
Dangers at time of courtship	63	2	3	61	3	3	276	10	14	74	6	5
Responsibilities of married life	63	5	0	64	1	1	262	21	17	75	8	2
Birth control	42	21	5	43	14	14	225	52	23	54	21	10

In order to evaluate properly the answers given relative to the matter of birth control, it should be remarked that the term was misunderstood by several respondents who did not realize that the question was listed solely to designate the Catholic attitude.

In contrast to what the Catholic high school should do, Miss Horan publishes in the same magazine[5] an inquiry into what the Catholic high school does do in this regard. Miss Horan admits that the data belonging to the group of problems listed display a more skewed picture than do those of any other groups included in her study. Graduates of Catholic high schools, with the exception of a small minority, do not seem to feel that they were prepared to meet the situations listed. It is well to remember that some of the individuals who replied that adequate information had been given were persons who did not believe that such information should be given. It is necessary to remember this in examining the table opposite.

The teachers in our Catholic high schools could do so much more in the matter. Compared with the teachers in the public high schools, they have many advantages with regard to moral education. In a study made a few years ago as to how moral education might be provided for the pupils in the senior high schools, the writer, Miss Sarah Elizabeth Bundy arrived at the conclusion that in the public schools the teachers face four difficulties: (1) Religious and moral education are so closely knit together that the disappearance of the first has tended to crowd out the second; (2) moral education is more difficult in a modern high school with a large student body and an overcrowded curriculum; (3) the attitude of modern youth is such that the recital of the precepts of a few generations past would not be effective; (4) the social philosophy of many teachers cannot be so

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[5] Pp. 380-381.

Opinions of 300 graduates of Catholic High Schools on the adequacy of information given in Catholic High Schools on the life problems pertaining to marriage

Life problems	Number who said adequate information is given	Number who said that it is not given	Number who replied "Can't say"
Origin, meaning, reproduction of life	28	255	17
Danger of keeping company with a non-Catholic	219	74	7
How to make Catholic men friends	219	255	12
Nature and purpose of marriage	87	206	7
Dangers at time of courtship	63	224	13
When and how to be married—hour, season, place, service	107	187	6
Danger of going out with divorced men	142	149	9
Responsibilities of married life	87	201	12
Birth control	24	254	22
Delicacy in general conversation pertaining to marriage	124	147	29

readily passed on to a rising generation. If we take any of these four points, we shall recognize the opportunities that are available to the teachers in our Catholic high schools.[6]

The pupils of our Catholic high schools realize the need of clear instruction on the subject of marriage. In her study, *Religious Instruction in the Catholic High School,* Sister Mary Antonina, S.D.P., has furnished indisputable evidence that as pupils advance, their interests center more directly on these problems. What we have quoted on pp. 316ff. confirms this statement. The reader who would obtain detailed facts in this regard should turn to Chapter X of Sister Mary Antonina's book and he will find that the subject of marriage and home-making appeals to only 45 per cent of the boys in the first year of high school, while 75 per cent in the fourth year check it as appealing to them. In the girls' table this same item has a frequency of 69 per cent in the first year of high school and a frequency of 80 per cent in the fourth year. The topic of morals has a frequency of 68 per cent in the first year for boys and increases to 86 per cent in the fourth year, while the frequency in the girls' table ranges from 72 per cent in the first year to 93 per cent in the fourth year. The appeal of the topic of mixed marriages ranges from 41 per cent in the first year to 73 per cent in the fourth year for boys, and from 68 per cent in the first year to 73 per cent in the fourth year for girls.

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[6] The Provision of Moral Education for Pupils in the Senior High School, in: *School Review.* Oct.. 1926.

Some may object that our young people should wait until college for instruction relative to sex and marriage. But Miss Horan rightly asks: "What about Catholic girls who never attend college? What about Catholic girls who attend high school for only two years?" According to 1926 statistics for the whole of the United States—and Mr. Francis M. Crowley, Director of the Department of Education of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, assures us that the figures have not changed appreciably since—but 20 per cent of the girls who were graduated from Catholic high schools entered Catholic and non-Catholic colleges. For each 1,000 pupils who enter Catholic high schools in the United States only 559 reach the third year. And what is being done for the 442,284 Catholic boys and girls—who are in public high schools? And what are we doing for the more than

50 per cent of our Catholic children of high school age, 678,750 boys and girls, who are not attending any high school?

There is much truth in what one priest writes about neglecting the complete Catholic doctrine on the sub ject of vocation:

> Both priests and Sisters—but the latter especially—have often failed to impress upon the young the sublimity and sacredness of Matrimony. When the subject of vocation comes up in school or in the pulpit, the subject is often narrowed down to the priesthood or the religious state, instead of its being made to include the Sacrament of Matrimony. This neglect may be responsible to some extent for some of the false ideas on marriage that we find occasionally among our Catholic people. Some of our young people have no positive appreciation of the Sacrament, and hence have no antidote to fight off the vulgar and debasing knowledge that is offered them on the subject by the children of the world. Whereas if they were taught, from early childhood up, how sublime a state they enter who receive the Sacrament of Matrimony, they would be more apt to hearken to the teaching of the Church on the obligations of marriage.

One priest expects much from concerted action in the matter:

> I hear that our Bishops at their latest annual meeting held at the Catholic University in Washington have decided on a uniform policy with regard to giving dispensation for mixed marriages. Might it not be possible for our Bishops to issue a joint instruction to priests and people on the subject of the Sacrament of Matrimony? In this way there might be inaugurated a veritable crusade in defense of Catholic marriage. Individual Bishops might, on their part, take up the subject at their

> diocesan conferences and discuss ways and means—both natural and supernatural—for protecting our people from the serious dangers confronting them because of the alarming increase of birth control.

The futility of depending upon the so-called *instructio sponsorum* is brought out well by one priest:

> What could you expect from a half-hour's instruction given on the eve of the wedding to a young couple when they are dizzy with love and distracted with the thousand and one thoughts about temporal and secular affairs! You may speak with the voice of a prophet, and the young man and woman may be hearing your every word, but they fail to grasp what you are saying. Their minds are busy with other things. Moreover, their minds have probably been poisoned by the talk they have been hearing for years against the Catholic teaching on marriage. The girl has been misinformed perhaps by her own mother, and the instruction now given in the rectory is worse than useless in that it lets the pastor feel that he has done his duty, when his advice actually comes too late to change the minds of those who have formed their own opinions in the matter long ago.

We need not comment on the point made by several pastors that the wife's engaging in gainful occupation outside the home is a factor that encourages birth control, and hence militates against the primary purpose of marriage. The study made by Dr. Davis also shows that the wife's occupation outside the home is a factor that makes for unhappy marriages.[7] Another fact brought out in the survey conducted by Dr. Davis is that the neglect of the proprieties during the days of courtship is a factor that may make for an unhappy married life.[8]

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[7] *Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-Two Hundred Women,* New York, 1929, pp. 59-60

The Dangers of Courtship

The rules laid down for the days of courtship by several of our respondents can best be summarized by quoting the old rule of the theologians: Company keeping will be proper if these conditions are observed—(1) there must be the intention to marry; (2) there must be a probability or at least a possibility of marriage; (3) the proprieties must be observed.

One pastor submitted a set of directions that may assist priests in their instructions of the young people:

> Girls may allow themselves to be over-persuaded in the matter. And as when in love they are often hardly rational, they need to be warned against being deceived by the specious assurances of young men that "there is no harm" in proceedings which their instinct and Christian education tell them are highly improper. A woman's instinct in these matters is all but infallible. With a view to obviating dangers, the following suggestions may be made: (1) the external tokens of affection may usually be judged lawful as they would or would not be held suitable in the presence of a well-ordered family between a loving brother and sister. (2) One cannot lay down the rule that all external caresses, such as embracing or kissing (in a restrained or conventional way) between practically engaged persons are even venially sinful. And yet, if excessive, they become a danger. At the same time, where there is a fixed mutual intention of future marriage, such pledges of affection, if modest in kind and degree, are lawful for fostering attachment.

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[8] *Ibid.*

> If, contrary to intention, such attentions carry the passion of either irresistibly beyond due limits, no mortal sin will be committed unless fully deliberate gratification is sought for in the excess. In this matter, much depends upon individual temperament. However, it will be necessary for each to regard what may prove a dangerous temptation to the other.

It is here again where we realize the need of having each of the two young people plainly instructed about the difference of the sex instinct in man and woman.[9] Father Fulgence Meyer, O.F.M., offers an argument in the matter of observing the proprieties that will appeal to the young woman.[10] A professor of a university while addressing a class of young women on the psychology of courtship, said very plainly: "Girls, if you want a husband, do not kiss him before you get him; if you do, you will not get him." Father Meyer shows that the pointed remark embodies a great deal of practical psychology. Many promising courtships are stranded because of the neglect of the proper reserve between the lovers. One familiarity leads to another, and soon the young man and the young woman will tire of each other, and mutual disgust will soon follow. At all events the man will weary of the woman he finds to be easy and loose, and seeks or forces a reason to break up the courtship, and to tell her directly or indirectly, yet unmistakably: "Get thee gone." Such cases are not rare before marriage, and even if married, the disgust will carry over, and the marriage may be unhappy in consequence.

Many surveys that have been made prove that the better judgment of our young people condemns the practice of spooning or "petting" or whatever other term may happen to be used to designate undue liberties between the sexes. Data compiled by the National Council of the Y.M.C.A. following a world-wide survey of boy attitudes show that the youths prefer the girl who does not "pet."[11] In general, according to the discussion summaries, boys' standards are high. They feel that indulgence in "petting" is detrimental to character. Groups of boys called together in more than 100 communities to discuss various youth problems, brought out such comments as these:

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[9] Cf. *supra*, pp. 311 ff.

[10] *Youth's Pathfinder*, Cincinnati, 1927, pp. 361-362.

> "If a fellow wants a 'hot date' he gets it, and if he wants a 'clean' date he gets it."
>
> "We would not like to have a wife whom everyone had 'pawed' over."
>
> "A girl should be one a fellow can look up to."
>
> "Smoking and profanity are both the results of trying to show off."
>
> "Why don't the girls object to 'petting'; why do they seem to like it?"
>
> "They expect us to take the initiative to stop it," complained one youngster.

In Brooklyn, at a joint discussion for boys and girls averaging seventeen years of age, it was decided that to check the habit of "petting," self-control was necessary on both sides. The boys admitted that sometimes they deliberately attempt to "take liberties", while the girls confessed that they permit too many "liberties" and give the impression that they "expect to be petted." "Many fellows act questionably by bringing liquor to dances, and the girls are too anxious to show off by wanting to smoke," the boys declared. The group diagnosed the trouble as partly due to the fact that "girls and fellows lose their heads when they think they are in love."

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[11] *Washington Post*, July 8, 1926.

High Ideals

Surveys conducted among Catholic youth reveal that the boy and girl in their heart of hearts recognize the need of high standards. For instance, the Sixth Annual Religious Survey conducted at Notre Dame University during the year 1925-1926 produced evidence that with regard to the type of girl a Catholic man would marry, the best trait she can have is to be "of good character"; the next best qualification is to be a Catholic; and the third, to be a home-maker. Two hundred sixty-three of the students said that their girl was an inspiration, and only 92 that she was not; 214 said that she furthered their religious progress, 10 that she did not, and 185 that she had no influence on it; the great majority intend to marry a girl who will give their children a sound Catholic training.

Much more evidence could be adduced to show that the Rev. Dr. John M. Cooper is right when he says [12] that the average man—there are exceptions of course —wants to keep clean, and wants the girl he loves to keep clean. Likewise, the average girl—here, too, there are exceptions—wants to go straight, and wants the man she loves to go straight. If each understood the other's nature and impulses better, their courtship problems would not, it is true, be solved by 100 per cent, but there would be fewer sins, more mutual consideration and protection, less liberties, and more of ennobling and purifying love on its highest levels.

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[12] *Religion Outlines for Colleges*, Course IV, Washington, D. C., 1928. p. 103.

It may seem discouraging to contrast with these high ideals the ugly realities. However, it would be futile to carry our heads in the clouds or to bury them like the ostrich in the sand by refusing to face facts. We have in the first chapter referred to the sad findings as disclosed by Dr. Davis in her study of college women. Are the conditions among college men any better? Dr. Exner's study of 948 college men, regarding their sex experiences, shows that many men begin experimentation in such matters before they are fully developed. In 36 per cent out of 518 responses, indulgence in sex relations was admitted. Of 441 boys who gave details, it was found that fifteen years was the average age at which such practice began.[13] The study of 186 college graduate men made by Drs. Peck and Wells in 1923 disclosed the fact that 35 per cent admitted pre-marital sexual intercourse.

All Catholic students of the subject are inclined to believe that the situation is much better among our Catholic young people. A Catholic physician with a long and extensive experience in the profession writes:

> What percentage of young men fall in this way [of premarital sexual intercourse] there is no way of knowing, but my own experience in the matter is that the sweeping generalizations of doctors in this matter are not justified, at least as far as Catholic young men and young women are concerned. I have talked to non-Catholic young men about their companions and them-

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[13] *Problems and Principles of Sex Education,* New York, 1015, pp. 16-18.

selves, and have found among them also a tendency to exaggerate the evil—which is certainly bad enough as it is.

It was thought useful to submit certain questions to 20 Catholic physicians to record their experiences with regard to Catholic young men. The questions and answers (summarized) are presented herewith:

At what age do Catholic boys commit their first offense?

There are isolated cases of early corruption before the use of reason. After the age of puberty there are a few cases at fifteen, usually with high school girls, more at sixteen, and many more at seventeen. The latter age and eighteen show the peak, after which there is a rapid decline in first offenses, although some have been found as late as thirty.

What occasioned the first fall?

Petting and drink are the most frequent occasions; sometimes it is a combination of the two; sometimes drink brings on the first trip to a house of prostitution. Curiosity leads secretive boys to a house of prostitution, sometimes with the idea that it will cure self-abuse, although some boys do this who have never been afflicted with this malady. A surprising number of boys have been led astray by older women who have trapped them—married women, divorcees, legitimate widows (less often), and women suffering from something akin to nymphomania during or after the menopause.

What emotional reaction do boys experience from the first offense?

Disgust at the act itself and sickening discouragement at the crashing of ideals are the usual accompaniments if the boy has his senses about him. This is not so evident if the offender is sixteen or under; and drink blunts the feeling a great deal. The feeling seems to grow in intensity as the offender is older. It is rarely absent if the boy is old enough to realize what he was doing and was clear-headed at the time. These rare cases were: (1) In some cases of Protestants and ill-instructed Catholics who had been told that the Sixth Commandment forbade only the invasion of another's home; (2) in some cases of intense infatuation, where the couple regarded themselves as practically married.

How long a period elapsed between the first and second falls?

If the act occurred with a lover it is quite likely to happen soon again if the girl permits it, in spite of all intentions, resolutions, oaths and vows to the contrary. If the first offence was with a prostitute and the disgust was quite strong, it is likely to take six months to overcome the disgust; at the end of that time, however, it is likely to happen half-a-dozen times within a month. On the other hand, the relapse has been known to happen within two weeks, and even within twenty-four hours. In the last case there was always discernible a sort of despair of ever regaining self-respect.—— It is important to note that boys who have fallen with prostitutes usually stick to them; and vice versa with "good girls."

THE SACREDNESS OF CATHOLIC MARRIAGE

All these facts go to prove how necessary it is in these latter days, when marriage and love are treated so lightly, to insist strongly upon the sacred character of Catholic marriage. The priest must offer proof that love and marriage are not things to play with, or to take lightly. He may use plain language to bring home to young people the fact that those who fall in love easily are apt to fall out of love quite as readily. Many unhappy marriages can be traced to the circumstance that young people are rather prone to "fall" in love. Young people should recognize that being in love implies the realization that here is a life partner—a realization that calls for serious adjustments. The new state of life is not to be entered into lightly, certainly not a situation to *fall* into![14]

A splendid viewpoint is expressed by a Catholic layman who while engaged in the United States Public Health Service in fighting the social diseases, has begun to realize more than ever before the need of the highest ideals. He writes:

> With regard to preparation for marriage we must hold to the fundamental fact that man is to choose a mate to help him reach Heaven. The very term "helpmate" expresses that idea. The primary purpose of man on earth is to save his immortal soul. All else is secondary. I should suggest that the secondary purposes of life should prove means to accomplish the primary purpose. Sex education must not confine itself to the problem of preventing venereal diseases, but should promote a wholesome idea of the married state as well as the single state, and should insist that all human living must be subordinated to the laws laid down by the Creator.

These selfsame views are found deep down in the hearts of all our young people—in some cases they are down too deep ever to become articulate. And in many more cases there is danger lest the example of the multitude who insist on thinking as they live, instead of living as they think, will gradually corrupt the thinking of our Catholic people. A book that will set straight the thinking of our young women is Ethne's *Love, Courtship, and Marriage.*[15] And it is the young women, as we have repeatedly pointed out, who stand most in need of protection and direction in our day when their ancient safeguards have been cast aside. Philosophers tell us that to a man human love is rarely the be-all and end-all of his existence, but that to the woman it is the essence and soul of her life. Let a woman's love become tainted, and her highest ideals are in imminent danger of extinction. Jane Eyre describes the temptation of many a woman when in love:

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[14] Cf. Newell W. Edson, *Love in the Making: A Talk to Older Boys*, New York, 1925, p. 6.

> My future husband was becoming to me my whole world; and more than the world: almost my hope of heaven. He stood between me and every thought of religion, as an eclipse intervenes between man and the broad sun. I could not, in those days, see God for His creature, of whom I had made an idol.

With the prevalence of sex literature and sex talk, it would seem to be useless to demand that the young people should know before marrying in what the marriage relation consists. However, the study made by Dr. Davis has adduced evidence that there is gross ignorance even among college women in this matter. Eleven of the college women admitted that they would not have married if they had known previously in what the marriage relation consisted. Four hundred thirty-eight college women complained that they had not been adequately instructed about the physical side of marriage, and 257 of these declared that a "constructive and frank statement before marriage" would have helped them, while 29 said it would have harmed.[16] There can be no doubt that proper instruction in this regard is an important factor for happiness in marriage. Nearly 57 per cent of the Davis group who described their marriage as happy, had received some general sex instruction, while only 44 per cent of the unhappy group had not been so instructed, and the difference in this respect between the two groups is demonstrably significant in its relation to happy marriages.[17]

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[15] St. Louis, 1929.

Still, there is in such instruction no need of physical details, as detailed instruction would be useless and might prove a dangerous factor for the imagination. Hence there should be no attempt to explain the marriage relation in all detail.

THE LESSON OF SELF-RESTRAINT IN MARRIAGE

But while specific information may be urgently needed in the case of the young woman, it is necessary to insist in the case of the young man upon the need of self-control in marriage. Sexual intemperance and selfishness of men in marriage cause untold mental and physical sufferings of women, and natural and supernatural reasons should be given for that harmonious adjustment between husband and wife that is a necessary condition for perfect happiness. Timely instruction and warning about excess in marital relations will prevent the young married couple from realizing what Shelley calls "love's sad satiety," when "bitter loathing follows burning love," and from suffering the disillusion described by Thomas Moore:

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[16] *Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-Two Hundred Women*, New York, 1929, p. 65.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 63.

> How light was thy heart till love's witchery came,
> And hushed all its music, and withered its frame.

However, this does not mean that the young people should not be told plainly what is permitted and what not. Many married people go on for years thinking wrongly about the morality of certain acts which are perfectly proper for those who are joined in wedlock. Father Fulgence Meyer, O.F.M., has done well in talking frankly about this matter in his *Plain Talks on Marriage.*[18] Another good treatment of the difficult subject is that by "Franciscus," *De Actibus Conjugum Qui Dicuntur Imperfecti;*[19] the priest will do well to remember this principle for the *instructio sponsorum* as well as for general application in the confessional: *"Conjuges inter se unum tantum peccatum idque mortale committere possunt, sc. si voluntarie et scienter aut impediunt generationem aut intendunt habere pollutionem. Si quid vero ex his fit quod non praeviderunt et fieri noluerunt, non peccant."*

When we consider the prevalence of the social diseases, we understand why so many pastors approve in our questionnaire of the recommendation made by Dr. Lawrence F. Flick, that those about to marry should offer to each other voluntarily a certificate indicating freedom from communicable disease. Dr. Flick has produced incontestable evidence[20] that moral and social interests demand protection against the far-reaching consequences of the venereal diseases, and that the mutual and voluntary offering of health certificates, preliminary to marriage, would remove a strong inhibitory influence which now keeps many clean-minded young women out of marriage.

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[18] Cincinnati, 1927, p. 46-47.

[19] *Ecclesiastical Review*, Aug., 1925, pp. 178ff.

[20] "The Pastor and Health Certificates for Marriage," in: *Ecclesiastical Review*, Oct., 1929, p. 347ff.

Attacking the Problem of Birth Control

Our questionnaire returns show that Father Joseph V. Nevins, S.S., in his much-discussed articles on "Education to Catholic Marriage,"[21] did not underestimate the hold that the preaching and the practice of birth control have upon our Catholic people. Father Nevins admits that birth control is practiced to an alarming extent,* and that it is frankly discussed by our young unmarried men and women, and even by our youth who are yet too young to contemplate marriage. Birth-control ideas, under one form or another, or under one name or another, are in the air and in the minds of all.† And the sad result of all this discussion is that we live in an age when it is no longer possible merely to hand on generally accepted truths. Even our Catholic people are no longer accepting these truths. They are rationalizing about the Catholic teachings and standards of marriage. Commonplaces and platitudes will not convince them of the error of their ways. They must be brought to realize that birth control can only be regarded as an abuse of the marital relation, which is thus diverted from the primary purpose—procreation—and exclusively directed to its secondary purpose—personal gratification.

[21] *Ecclesiastical Review*, Sept. and Dec., 1928.

* Cf. *supra*, p. 100. † Cf. *supra*, p. 5.

When people argue that the Church in course of time will modify her teaching on the subject, they must be made to realize that the Church is not free to change a natural law which condemns the immoral perversion of a human faculty. Bishop Maurus Nardi, O.M.Cap., offers one of the best treatises on this matter in his book, *De sanctitate matrimonii contra onanismum.*[22] Father Henry Woods, S.J., suggests methods for preaching on the subject and offers arguments that expose the malice of the practice from both the natural standpoint and the supernatural. The same writer has published a useful pamphlet on the subject, *Nature's Protest against Counter-Conceptives.*[23]

That our respondents are right in blaming chiefly physicians and women for disseminating birth-control information may be seen from what the Davis study disclosed: the married college women indicated the following sources of their information on contraceptive measures:

Physicians	370
Married women friends	174
Husband	139
Mother	42
Friend of husband	39
Books	33
Birth-control circulars	31
"Common knowledge"	27
Nurse	15
Medical studies	9
"Various"	8

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[22] Rome, 1907, pp. 25-44; cf. also *Birth Control* by John M. Cooper, and *Family Limitation* by John A. Ryan.

[23] Santa Clara, California, 1929.

The Bible	2
A psychoanalyst	1

Several conclusions are here in order. Keep a watchful eye upon the physicians practicing among our people. See to it that Catholic students of medicine are trained in such universities as will assure their getting Christian ethics in medicine. Thirdly, carry out the excellent suggestions offered by Father Nevins for stopping the birth-control propaganda carried on by Catholic women.

While the priest must be patient in exposing the fallacies by which penitents will try to excuse the practice of birth control, he will find in the end that the appeal to be effective must be supernatural. Natural motives may support the incentive to obey the law of God, but in the final analysis the conviction that will bring about a reform is born of the fear of the Lord. The law of God is ultimately the strongest motor force.

With such a force to draw upon, we should not despair of expecting married people to retain the spirit of sacrifice and to perform the duties of veritable martyrs. In fighting the evil of birth control the odds may seem to be against us. But it is a fight for the cause of God, and one with God is a majority. Would it, then, not be cowardly to beat a retreat instead of firing back when we hear the bark of the enemy's guns? Father Nevins reminds us that admission of defeat would not be Catholic; there is balm in Gilead, and the arm of the Lord is not shortened. Once we get all our people—both the clergy and the laity—to realize the seriousness of the problem we may inaugurate the crusade that will not content itself with sporadic preaching and warning, but that will attack the evil at the root, drive out naturalism, and compel consistency in preaching and practicing the Gospel of Christ Crucified, and that not only in the pulpit and in the confessional, but also in the heart of the home, in the school, in the market place, in the shop, in the office, in the press, and in the thousand other ramifications of Catholic life. But such consistency is impossible without complete Catholic character education of both young and old. The consideration of the ways and means of organizing such character education will form the subject-matter of the next and concluding chapter of our book.

CHAPTER XIX

THE NEED OF CATHOLIC CHARACTER EDUCATION

At the Convention of the National Education Association held in Indianapolis, in 1925, Dr. Henry Noble Sherwood, State Superintendent of Public Instruction in Indiana, had as the subject of his address *The Morals of Modern Youth.* The three chief causes he gave for lack of morality among the young people of our country are lack of parental authority and interest, lack of religious education, and commercializing entertainment of youth.

While we do not deny the influence of the three causes assigned by Dr. Sherwood, we would say that the morals of modern youth are only a phase of the morals of the modern age. During the last generation there has taken place a real revolution in modern society and in the most important social institution—the family. There is a new philosophy abroad, and modern education merely reflects that philosophy, and modern youth is the fruit thereof. The family and the home are pillars of the temple of Christian civilization, and who will deny that they have been seriously impaired by the onslaught of the naturalism that is abroad in the world? We believe that we have adduced ample proof in support of the statement made in our Introduction[1] that our age is one in which the temptations from without have grown to an alarming extent, while the supports from within have been weakened very seriously.

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[1] *Supra,* p. xv.

There are many leaders who are discarding entirely the control of the will. The watchword is no longer "Obey the principle," but "Obey your impulse." Popular slogans of the day are: "Live your own life"; "Express your own self"; "Obey the supreme authority of your own impulses." Common opinion has it that all repression is dangerous. The new morality is therefore consistently based on a statistical study of the way men live. What the majority wishes to do, that is the moral law. At the most we are told that economics, or biology, or psychology should be the sole guides in shaping human conduct. Moral standards are said to have no permanency. These views are well expressed by Junius Vincent in *Ruth Talks It Over*:

> Let me make it clear now that, according to my view, human welfare and happiness are dependent absolutely upon biological and psychological laws that are as binding as the law of gravity, say. If we can discover how these laws operate in particular concrete cases, we shall have a safe guide in determining how we should act. But if we ignore these laws, or if we cannot discern their bearing, then we are as a ship adrift. There is, of course, a moral aspect to most important problems of human conduct, but the aim in all moral control is to promote the well-being and happiness of individuals and of society. Now, unfortunately, there are so many moral standards in regard to almost every concrete case that it is difficult or impossible for a number of people to reach agreement regarding the kind of conduct that will return the richest rewards in human happiness. You have often illustrated this fact in our conversations, Ruth, because you have quoted the conflicting views of various

> women of your acquaintance in regard to specific actions. Some think it is immoral to smoke, for instance, while others think it is entirely moral; and one person's opinion is as good as another's.[2]

Thus the court of final appeal in moral matters is the individual's judgment as to what will contribute most to his own well-being and the welfare of society. Here we have the modern version of Satan's lie: "You shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." [3] The educational policy of any age reflects the philosophy of the age, and therefore we have in twentieth-century education no mention of the sublime commandments of religion: "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not." Instead, we have as at the time of the French Encyclopedists the deification of human reason and an insisting upon the all-sufficiency of knowledge and enlightment. But the training of will and of character generally receives scant attention. Sister Callixta, C.D.P., made a study of eleven widely used texts in psychology to discover how much space was given to these subjects. She found only four of the eleven authors treating of either character, will, personality, or mental hygiene. Out of a sum total of 1,100 pages only 13.3 per cent is devoted to this all-important phase of education.[4] Intellectual development, tests and measurements, and individual differences are receiving increased attention, while character formation and the will are largely overlooked.

However, we are reaping the fruits of this policy and there is genuine alarm over the results. But the sexual immorality has, at any rate, one good result:

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[2] New York, 1925, pp. 15-16.

[3] Gen. III, 5.

[4] *Catholic Educational Review*, June, 1926, pp. 335-336.

it throws a bright though lurid light upon this disastrous weakness of the spirit of modern education, and thus paves the way for a reform. There is noticeable in American educational literature a new insistence on character training, and in our general literature the most extraordinary phenomenon to-day is the complete bankruptcy of the naturalistic movement.

THE FAILURE OF NATURALISTIC EDUCATION

We hear the leaders in our public school system confessing frankly that American education has failed in the moral field. For instance, Professor William C. Bagley, of Columbia University, writing on "Some Handicaps of Character Education in the United States,"[5] does not fail to recognize the achievements of American education. He finds that the increase in enrollment in the public schools and the increased percentage of those who continue in higher schools is greater than in any other country. The influence of education is reflected in better health, higher levels of culture, and greater economic efficiency among the masses of the people. There is a rising circulation and consumption of solid literature in both books and magazines, and there is probably a similar rise in the appreciation of good art and good music. Our increased material prosperity is undoubtedly in part due to education.

But in contrast to this side of the picture, Professor Bagley points to the amoral conditions promoted, as he says, by our system of education. He charges the schools with failing to check the riotous freedom of our youth, and complains that there is more lawlessness and crime in America than in any comparable nation. Nor is this due to our foreign population, for the states that have the largest foreign-born population have the lowest crime ratios. In Canada the prison records show that immigrants rate in criminality two and one-half times those of Canadian birth and double those of British birth. Mr. C. H. Henderson has shown, in *Pay Day*,[6] that to every million of inhabitants Canada has each year 3 murders; Germany, under 5; Great Britain, 10; France, 14; Belgium, 16; while the United States has 129. This increased criminal ratio began in the United States before the War and before the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment.

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[5] *Educational Administration and Supervision,* April, 1929, pp. 241-249.

Among the handicaps in solving these conditions, Professor Bagley blames chiefly the mobility of our population, the American tradition of lawlessness, the diverse standards of conduct of a mixed population, and finally our increased prosperity in that increase in wealth brings with it an increase in unoccupied time, which in turn increases the moral hazard, for many people do not know how to spend this leisure. The same writer goes on to blame education for following the trend of the times, which has been towards individual freedom without consideration for the common good. This individualism he finds reflected in our growing divorce rate without an attitude of responsibility towards the children belonging to these broken homes.

And what remedy is proposed? Professor Bagley contends that the remedy is a proper combination of the best elements taken from the theory of extreme individual freedom on the one hand and from the hard materialism on the other: there is "a pressing demand for a type of instruction, inspiration, and discipline that will mean for the great masses a real intellectual advance"; we want freedom, but it must be "disciplined freedom," for "in the individual as in the race, true freedom is always a conquest, never a gift."[7]

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[6] P. 109.

There is no suggestion throughout this serious study of the learned Professor that there might be need of turning to the "Eternal Hills whence cometh all help."[8] The builders of our public school system have rejected "the chief cornerstone, Jesus Christ, in Whom all the building, being framed together, groweth up into an holy temple in the Lord, in Whom you also are built together into an habitation of God in the Spirit."[9] But when these builders find the structure that has been reared upon sand, falling about their ears, they cast about for more sand to support the edifice instead of opening their eyes to the real cause of their failure.

It is here where our Catholic educators have a golden opportunity for rendering pragmatic proof as to how the nation can be saved from moral ruin. To provide this pragmatic proof there is needed in our Catholic schools a more intelligent and a more consistent emphasis upon the religious foundation of all morality. A diocesan superintendent of schools remarked recently that the need of the hour is to keep our Catholic schools Catholic, but a second superintendent, noting certain evidences of secularism and naturalism in our educational system, contended that some of our schools may first need to be made truly Catholic.

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[7] *Ibid.*, p. 249. [8] Ps. CXX, 1. [9] Eph. II, 20-22.

THE NEED OF NEW EFFORTS IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION

In fact, there is urgent need for renewed efforts all along the line of Catholic education. A few years ago Archbishop Keating of Liverpool warned Catholic educators that their methods might grow out of date and sterile of results just as the farmer's furrows turn into ruts and are barren of results.[10] It is true, the barrenest of ruts was probably itself a fruitful furrow once upon a time, and the freshest furrows of to-day are not unlikely to harden into ruts within a generation or so. Some of our present methods are barren of results and hence we must cast about for new methods to meet new needs. The Archbishop concluded that while these truisms should make the young tolerant of old fogeys, they should not discourage them from the attempt to replace ruts by furrows.

But, while we are looking for new methods to meet new needs, we may not depart from those time-honored principles which underlie all sound education and which have been so well restated by Pope Pius XI in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*:[11]

> Disorderly inclinations must be corrected, good tendencies encouraged and regulated from tender childhood, and, above all, the mind must be enlightened and the will strengthened by supernatural truth and by the means

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[10] "Ruts and Furrows," in: *Sower,* Oct., 1927, p. 22.

[11] P. 21.

> of grace, without which it is impossible to control evil impulses, impossible to attain to the full and complete perfection of education intended by the Church, which Christ has endowed so richly with divine doctrine and with the Sacraments, the efficacious means of grace.

Adequate training in chastity can be accomplished only in union with a complete Christian education. Training in chastity, as Father Kilian J. Hennrich, O.M.Cap., remarks,[12] though it is an important part of education, is nevertheless but one part and perhaps not even the most important part. It must form an integral part of moral education from the earliest years and cannot be postponed until sex reveals itself plainly to the growing child. Here is the sum and substance of Catholic training in chastity: Give a solid religious training in general, especially in the use of the Sacraments; begin early to instruct the mind as to self-control in general, with simple applications to the sex instinct, while replying frankly to sincere questions in private; and try fully to instruct the child whenever the occasion requires.

We shall obey the instruction of Pope Pius XI as given in the same Encyclical [13] when we utilize to the fullest possible extent whatever natural aids may be discovered by the new education or the new psychology:

> The Christian teacher will imitate the bee, which takes the choicest part of the flower and leaves the rest, as St. Basil teaches in his discourse to youths on the study of the classics. Nor will this necessary caution, suggested also by the pagan Quintilian, in any way hinder the Christian teacher from gathering and turning to profit

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[12] *Watchful Elders*, Milwaukee, 1929, p. 11.

[13] P. 29.

> whatever there is of real worth in the systems and methods of our modern times, mindful of the Apostle's advice: "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good."[14]

The priest in particular may never scorn whatever promises to be of assistance in the hard battle of preserving the chastity of our young people. His motto must be: *Medicus spiritualis sum; nihil de castitate a me alienum puto.* It is his duty and privilege to minister to the spiritual ills of the race, and hence he may not neglect whatever might assist him in the hard effort to keep our young people chaste. By keeping on the alert to discover new means, he will not surrender any tried and venerable principles of Christian education, but will prevent the application of these principles from growing out of date and unsuited to present needs. He will also be carrying out the teaching of the masters of the spiritual life who tell us to pray as though everything depended upon God and to labor as though everything depended upon ourselves:

> If grace transforms us, it does not deform us; if it deifies us, it does not dehumanize us: theologians teach us this. God Himself acts personally in us, but by adapting, one may say, His activity to ours; by leaving to us, under the efficacious influence of His grace, the merit of initiative and liberty; by subjecting, consequently, the direct growth of the supernatural virtues to the law of human action. . . . In making us Christians, God always respects our liberty as upright men. The supernatural virtues are from Him; they are given freely to us for our service, and from Him comes, or not, their increase. It is very good to count upon God's service, but it is

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[14] I Thess. V, 21.

better to realize at the same time that God counts on us.[15]

RELIGION—THE BASIC FACTOR

All this is no more than an amplification of what St. Augustine tells us in his 169th Sermon: "God made thee without thine own self, yet He doth not justify thee without thyself. He made thee without thy knowledge; He justifieth thee with thy will." However, lest we expect too much help from what is purely natural, we must remember what St. Augustine says further: "Nevertheless it is He that justifieth, lest it should be thine own righteousness, lest thou shouldest return to loss, forfeit, and dung. . . . And this be thy power: the fellowship of Christ's sufferings will be thy power."[16]

This same truth stated so clearly by St. Augustine has been brought out in several surveys conducted among our young people: with regard to the essential factor for training in chastity, i.e., the strengthening of the will—religion will always prove most effective. For instance, in the Eighth Annual Religious Survey conducted at Notre Dame University, 1927-1928, the following replies were received in answer to the question: *What plans have you found successful in strengthening your will?*[17]

SUPERNATURAL	
Prayer	114
to the Blessed Virgin	9

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[15] Gillet-Ross, *Innocence and Ignorance,* New York, 1917, p. 98.

[16] *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament,* Vol. II, Oxford, 1845, p. 866.

[17] *Official Bulletin of the University of Notre Dame,* March, 1928, pp. 136-137.

the Rosary	4
for the Suffering Souls	2
Aspirations	2
Self-denial	104
Frequent Communion	52
Holy Communion	30
Daily Mass	4
Visits to the Blessed Sacrament	5
Visits to the Grotto	4
Confession	5
Spiritual reading	2
Lives of the Saints	1
Meditation	8
on Judgment	5
on God's love	2
on death	1
on the ugliness of sin	1
Resignation to God's will	2
Humility	2
Thought of God's Presence	5
Thought of receiving next day	1
A vow	1
Penance	5
Spiritual advice	4
Doing hard things	52
Small sacrifices	6
Doing little disagreeable things	3
Fasting	2
One helping at table	1

NATURAL

Mental

Reason things out	29
Decide, then act	23
Work systematically	18
Make resolutions	14
Publish resolutions	2

Make secret promises	2
Thought of the future	12
of character	10
of home	7
of sweetheart	4
of mother	2
of others' folly	1
of consequences	1
Control thoughts	4
Cultivate a motive	1
Begin with small things	8
Keep promises	2
Auto-suggestion	2
Nightly review	2
Written account of deeds	1
Self-reproach	6
Holding to ideals	2
Cultivate determination	17
ambition	1
self-control	2
perseverance	5
watchfulness	1

Moral

Self-imposed fines	5
Discipline	9
Study	9
Prompt action	6
Tests	9
Avoiding occasions	13
Choosing good company	3
Following good example	6
Bets	1
Staying on campus	3
Reading biographies	2
Sharing confidence	1
Fleeing temptations	3
Playing with fire (?)	3

Physical

Early rising	16
Early retiring	1
Cold shower	2
Athletics	1

We believe that we can best summarize the evidence we have presented in this matter of natural and supernatural helps by quoting the testimony of a Catholic physician:

> I asked an excellent young man who did have much trouble with sex matters (especially with the solitary sin) and who later pulled away beautifully from all such weaknesses, now having also a temporary vow of chastity, as to what he felt had helped him most in his battle. He answered: "Laying the natural foundation first, getting matters clearly explained and 'lined up,' then building upon that with the supernatural motives." I might add that this young man always felt very free to go to the priest and ask about anything he did not understand and was curious about.

We believe that we have produced in the present book ample evidence in support of our contention that religion is the strongest aid in controlling the lower nature. We realize, of course, that on this point we are at variance with most of the literature published on sex education. Most writers declare that religion has lost its power in the modern world, and that it is therefore futile to suggest religious motivation in regard to controlling the sex instinct. Satan has succeeded in his attempt to separate religion from instruction, and has thus cut through the roots of the Christian civilization of the world. Hence we find all the art, all the wiles, all the frauds, all the false politics of our day directed to what is called secular education, national education, efficient education—anything you like, only not Christian education.

It would be well for modern educationists to heed the warning of Professor Foerster, the eminent non-Catholic writer:

> There is one particular point of difference between the modern sexual reformers and the old ethics and pedagogy; the former do not recognize the whole difficulty which man has in rising above his lower self; they do not realize that even to secure a very small measure of will power and spiritual freedom it is absolutely necessary to elevate and enthrone the spirit and to strengthen it in its position of purity and security against nature. The moderns, although they may not know it, are still living upon the moral capital which was stored up during the ages of heroic self-conquest; they have not as yet the faintest idea of the low level to which man will sink when the great commandments and ideals of old shall have entirely given way to the indulgent tolerance with which the modern world regards the sensuous feelings. In the sphere of sex it is peculiarly true that only the most powerful spiritual demands and claims can bring a certain measure of respect from the world of instinct. Many of our modern enlightened educators appear to me, therefore, like engineers trying to dam gigantic torrents with wisps of straw. One day, when the water bursts out over the whole country, they will realize the inadequacy of their means.[18]

We must therefore repudiate any system of education that considers only "the instant need of things" or what Matthew Arnold would call our animality against our humanity, for any such system leads to that pedagogic naturalism so vigorously and effectively condemned by Pope Pius XI in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth.* Yet we must insist, on the other hand, that the religious foundation alone will not suffice. Men will say: "I have tried prayer, and it did not help." Again, we may not ignore the need of instruction and follow the policy of silence, especially now that these topics of sex are being discussed everywhere. Men will say: "Why was I not told this long ago?" Nor will it do to recommend only the swimming pool or the golf course. Men will plead: "Do form my mind for me." Scolding and reprimanding will not support the many who are depressed over their failings, or frightened because of their relapses. Mere warnings about hell are not sufficient. Mere sex information will not solve the problem. Instruction about the Catholic doctrine on artificial birth restriction will be of little help unless our married people have become habituated to happy self-control from youth.

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[18] *Marriage and the Sex Problem*, New York, 1913, pp. 219-220.

No, training in chastity may not confine itself to any one thing. There is no one cure-all for the sex ills that afflict the human race. The training in chastity must include all moral, social, scientific, religious instruction, influence, and habituation that may in any way help young people to control their lower nature.

Professor Foerster lays down these two principles: (1) the foundation of all sound education in sex must consist in *distracting* the mind from sexual matters, not in directing it towards them; (2) the problem of moral preservation in this sphere is a question of *power* far more than of *knowledge.*[19] However, we

[19] *Ibid.,* p. xii.

must add to the statement of the first principle that when it is foreseen that sex problems will confront the child, we must so inform and direct him that he will suffer no harm from the contact with the dangerous matter. Also, with regard to the second principle we must insist that, while power is of more importance than knowledge, the latter element is essential to will power insofar as it is precisely the faulty judgment that makes for weakness of will.

St. Thomas, in taking up the subject of virginity,[20] suggests that we consider the body, the passions, and the will. The body, he explains, insofar as its health or other general condition is concerned, may be an aid or a hindrance. The passions may not be neglected, as they furnish the matter for moral acts. The will, finally, is the most important subject to be considered, as it constitutes the formal object of the virtue.

In a word, the training in chastity may never be regarded as though morality could be kept in a watertight compartment. We believe it a fatal mistake to attempt the teaching of morality as a separate something, and not to recognize that it ought to penetrate and dominate all our activities in behalf of the young. *The education of the whole child is the best training in chastity.* If we would train the young to control the sex instinct, we must develop their whole soul in such a way that all powers and faculties are properly co-ordinated and subordinated.

How Shall We Form the Character?

To achieve such co-ordination and subordination of all the faculties, we must, in the first place, develop the character of the child. To do this properly, we should have a clear conception of what character really is. It may assist us to remember that the word is derived from the Greek *character*, which is an instrument to cut furrows or to engrave. Character is the sum-total of all the qualities that have been engraved upon the soul and that have become part and parcel of a man. Character is life dominated by principle. A person's character forms his very atmosphere —it surrounds him like an aura of light.

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[20] *Summa theologica*, 2, 2, q. 152, art. 1.

Character is completely formed will, and we cannot know what character is until we make a study of the will. We remarked above that there is an intimate connection between a weak will and a faulty judgment insofar as the latter makes for weakening man's royal faculty. How to remedy this defect of character is the subject of *The Training of the Will* by the Rev. John Lindworsky, S.J.[21] The author analyzes superficial systems of will training and points out their dangers. Then he studies, in thoroughly scientific fashion, the problems of will training in the light of experimental psychology, modern pedagogy, and the ascetical theory embodied in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. The author proves that proper motives, that is, such as are understood to possess genuine value to the person concerned, plus enthusiasm, are the main elements in the process of will training.[22]

Let us remember that character is a fabric woven by our actions, words, and thoughts. A statue of Jupiter had the name of the artist so deeply imbedded that it could not be effaced without destroying the figure. So the teacher's and parents' personality should be impressed upon the young. But what demands does that requirement not make upon them with regard to the example they should give to the young people! Only by their being themselves imbued with the spirit of Christ can they hope to impress upon the young the character of the Divine Model.

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[21] Tr. by A. Steiner and E. A. Fitzpatrick, Milwaukee, 1929.

[22] Other helpful books on the subject are *The Education of Character* by Père Gillet, translated by Benjamin Green (Milwaukee, 1929), and the two booklets by Father Ernest R. Hull, S.J., *The Formation of Character* (St. Louis, 1921) and *Collapses in Adult Life* (St. Louis, 1922).

The development of a Christlike character should be the supreme objective of parents, priests, and teachers. Since it is a matter of faith that all the virtues are connected together in charity, and that, besides, the increase of the supernatural virtues is partly conditioned by the exercise of the corresponding natural virtues acquired under the impulsion of charity and with the co-operation of the natural virtues, we may not separate in the education of our children what God has joined together. Let our children pray, confess and communicate but so that their prayers, Confessions, and Communions help them to become more and more docile, respectful, industrious, conscientious, modest, mortified, self-controlled, energetic, and self-denying.

Pope Pius XI has well described in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth* [23] what should be our objective in character education:

> Hence the true Christian, the product of Christian education, is the supernatural man who thinks, judges, and acts constantly and consistently in accordance with right reason illumined by the supernatural light of the example and teaching of Christ; in other words, to use

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[23] P. 32.

> the current term, the true and finished man of character. For, it is not every kind of consistency and firmness of conduct based on subjective principles that makes true character, but only constancy in following the eternal principles of justice, as is admitted even by the pagan poet when he praises as one and the same "the man who is just and firm of purpose."[24]

Character training of this kind is in itself training in chastity since it is a fortification against every sort of undisciplined animalism. Make character training the center of your educational scheme for the child, and when the critical years come, there will be needed only a clear explanation of the nature of the new battle, and the youth will readily respond to the appeal of the higher motives to which he has reacted so often before. The results of teaching sex hygiene in our schools have demonstrated that Professor Foerster was right when he maintained that the modern enthusiasts for sex education greatly deceived themselves in thinking it advisable suddenly to introduce into the modern school a quantity of information about subjects connected with some of the most dangerous passions known to human nature:

> The schools of to-day are so exclusively intellectual and the character training they provide is so inadequate and superficial, that the boys and girls have not a sufficiently trained will-power, a well-enough developed consciousness of responsibility, or a pure enough sense of honor, to enable them to make a proper use of their dangerous knowledge.[25]

Individuals and nations are brought to ruin not by a lack of knowledge, but by a lack of proper conduct. Or to quote what Pope Pius XI says in his *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*[26] about "ignoring the experience of facts, from which it is clear that, particularly in young people, evil practices are the effect not so much of ignorance of intellect as of weakness of a will exposed to dangerous occasions, and unsupported by the means of grace." Consequently the outstanding feature of training in chastity should be, not an explanation of the sex functions, but an introduction to the inexhaustible power of the human spirit and its capacity for dominating the animal nature and controlling its demands. When young people have learned to appreciate the joy of such spiritual mastery, they have attained the highest possible protection against sexual temptations.

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[24] Horace, Od. I. III, od. 3, v. 1.

[25] *Marriage and the Sex Problem*, New York, 1919, p. 199.

The Power of the Will

What we steadfastly will to be, we become. Every one of us must say of himself:

> I am the master of my fate;
> I am the captain of my soul.

That we can do what we are determined to do, particularly in the matter of chastity, has been brought out convincingly by Cardinal Newman in his sermon on *The Power of the Will.*[27] His argumentation is eloquent support of our contention that in the training in chastity the will is the main thing, and hence we venture to quote in its entirety this telling passage:

> Why is it that we, in the very kingdom of grace, surrounded by angels, and preceded by saints, nevertheless

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[26] P. 23.

[27] *Parochial and Plain Sermons,* Vol. V, London, 1917, pp. 347ff.

can do so little, and instead of mounting with wings like eagles, grovel in the dust, and do but sin and confess sin alternately? Is it that the *power* of God is not within us? Is it literally that we are *not able* to perform God's commandments? God forbid! We are able. We have that given us which makes us able. We are not in a state of nature. We have had the gift of grace implanted in us. We have a power within us to do what we are commanded to do. What is it that we lack? The power? No; the will. What we lack is the real, simple, earnest, sincere inclination and aim to use what God has given us, and what we have in us. I say, our experience tells us this. It is no matter of mere doctrine, much less a matter of words, but of things; a very practical plain matter. . . .

When a man complains that he is under the dominion of any bad habit, let him seriously ask himself whether he has ever *willed* to get rid of it. Can he, with a simple mind, say in God's sight, "I wish it removed"?

A man, for instance, cannot attend to his prayers; his mind wanders; other thoughts intrude; time after time passes, and it is the same. Shall we say, this arises from want of power? Of course, it may be so; but before he says so, let him consider whether he has ever roused himself, shaken himself, awakened himself, got himself to will, if I may say so, attention. We know the feeling in unpleasant dreams, when we say to ourselves, "This is a dream," and yet cannot exert ourselves to will to be free from it; and how at length by an effort we will to move, and the spell at once is broken; we wake. So it is with sloth and indolence; the Evil One lies heavy on us, but he has no power over us except in our unwillingness to get rid of him. He cannot battle with us; he flies; he can do no more, as soon as we propose to fight with him.

There is a famous instance of a holy man of old time, who, before his conversion, felt indeed the excellence of purity, but could not get himself to say more in prayer than "Give me chastity, but not yet." I will not be inconsiderate enough to make light of the power of temptation of any kind, nor will I presume to say that Almighty God will certainly shield a man from temptation for his wishing it; but whenever men complain, as they often do, of the arduousness of a high virtue, at least it were well that they should first ask themselves the question, whether they desire to have it. We hear much in this day of the impossibility of heavenly purity;—far be it from me to say that everyone has not his proper gift from God, one after this manner, another after that;—but, O ye men of the world, when ye talk, as ye do, so much of the impossibility of this or that supernatural grace, when you disbelieve in the existence of severe self-rule, when you scoff at holy resolutions, and affix a slur on those who make them, are you sure that the impossibility which you insist upon does not lie, not in nature, but in the will? Let us but will, and our nature is changed "according to the power that worketh in us." Say not, in excuse for others or for yourselves, that you cannot be other than Adam made you; you have never brought yourselves to will it—you cannot bear to will it. You cannot bear to be other than you are. Life would seem a blank to you, were you other; yet what you are from not desiring a gift, this you make an excuse for not possessing it.

Let us take what trial we please—the world's ridicule or censure, loss of prospects, loss of admirers or friends, loss of ease, endurance of bodily pain—and recollect how easy our course has been, directly we had once made up our mind to submit to it; how simple all that remained became, how wonderfully difficulties were removed from without, and how the soul was strengthened inwardly to do what was to be done. But it is seldom we have heart to throw ourselves, if I may so speak, on the Divine Arm; we dare not trust ourselves on the waters, though Christ bids us. We have not St. Peter's love to ask leave

> to come to Him upon the sea. When we once are filled with that heavenly charity, we can do all things, because we attempt all things—for to attempt is to do.
>
> I would have everyone carefully consider whether he has ever found God fail him in trial, when his own heart had not failed him; and whether he has not found strength greater and greater given him according to his day; whether he has not gained clear proof on trial that he *has* a divine power lodged within him, and a certain conviction withal that he has not made the extreme trial of it, or reached its limits. Grace ever outstrips prayer. Abraham ceased interceding ere God ceased from granting. Joash smote upon the ground but thrice, when he might have gained five victories or six. All have the gift, many do not use it at all, none expend it. One wraps it in a napkin, another gains five pounds, another ten. It will bear thirty-fold, or sixty, or a hundred. We know not what we are, or might be. As the seed has a tree within it, so men have within them Angels.

What an incentive are these words for us to give to our boys and girls the proper appreciation of chastity; for, once they have the proper appreciation of the virtue, it will be theirs, since they can acquire what they are determined to acquire. A great soldier and statesman said of himself, ''I make circumstances,'' when referring to his achievements in politics and in war. How much truer is that statement with regard to gaining the victory over the temptations of the flesh! Let priests, parents, and teachers awaken in our young people the spirit of the conqueror—their supernatural ability which otherwise may always remain dormant. There is a nobility that lies in their soul, sleeping, perhaps, but never dead. There is need to awaken that nobility if we would have our young people win out in such situations—and such situations probably confront all of them in our age—as are revealed by the replies given (during the Seventh Annual Religious Survey conducted, 1926-1927, at the University of Notre Dame) in answer to the following question: *Do you find among your friends at school a tendency to ridicule a boy who will not join in sinful pleasures?* [28]

	At school	At home
No	415	238
Yes	113	284
Some tendency	98	223
Not seriously	16	3
Not friends	19	34
Often		9
Seldom	44	11
They respect him	21	7

While grace is all-powerful, it does not relieve us of the duty of developing to the utmost the natural strength of character of which our young people are capable. In *The Catholic Teacher's Companion* [29] we have tried to bring out some of the opportunities missed at times in our Catholic schools by not giving sufficient attention to the natural virtues. Msgr. Hugh L. Lamb makes the same criticism of the character formation in our schools, and draws attention to two further defects: the overemphasis on authority, and the infrequent use of the lives of the saints.[30]

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[28] *Official Bulletin of the University of Notre Dame,* Jan., 1928, p. 113.

[29] New York, 1924, pp. 402ff.

[30] "Vitalizing Religious Instruction," in: *Catholic Educational Review,* June, 1926, pp. 326ff.

Formation of Habits

We shall avoid some of these mistakes by giving more attention to the forming of correct habits in the young. A German psychologist has said: "*Der Mensch ist ein Gewohnheitstier*," which, translated freely, might read: Man is a bundle of habits. Indeed, we are what our habits make us. Our character is the result of acquired habits added to natural temperament. Character is the possession of habits, and the possession of habits is character. Hence, character education is largely the formation of habits, and the formation of habits is largely character education. Therefore, it must be the ceaseless endeavor of parents and teachers to prevent the formation of habits of wrong-doing; for such habits mean enfeeblement of the will and the weakness which is misery. So simple is the formation of an evil habit that it may take a long time before men realize that they are bound by this monster; yet it may be very difficult for them to extricate themselves. It takes more energy to stop a railroad train than to start it. No one can make a habit in a moment, or break it in a moment. It is a matter of development, of growth. But at any moment one can *begin* to make, or *begin* to break a habit. Acts develop habits, and habits form character, and character determines destiny. The boy who comes to the age of fourteen, boorish, selfish, or offensively loud, is very likely to retain these habits as a man. Habits are formed from three to fourteen; ideals from fourteen to twenty-one. Hence the imperative need of beginning early in life with the forming of character. How vain to attempt sex education at puberty if the training of character has been neglected!

The major implication of what science has discovered through researches in character education is that character can be taught. The key to the method is believed by some psychologists to be found in the conditioned response—that is, in the use of a stimulus that will render a response habitual. Equally important is *reconditioning*, which may be accomplished by verbal explanations, by disuse, by frequency of use (the old feeling wearing off as a result of familiarity), or by associating the stimulus with objects or situations to which the child makes favorable responses.[31]

It will prove helpful to let the child know as early as possible of the mechanism of the formation of habits, good or bad. Habits grow out of the nervous system. In the brain are millions of cells connected by fibers. When any thought or feeling passes through the mind, certain of these cells and fibers function together. Always the same thought or feeling causes activity in the same combination of cells and fibers. When such a group has once acted, it works more easily the next time it is called upon to function. The oftener it functions, the easier the action becomes until finally we say a habit has been formed. Even walking and talking had to be learned in this manner. If the child who is being instructed has the mental capacity for assimilating this idea, it will help him to point out how easily he can form good habits; that each time he performs a beneficial act the power to repeat it grows; and, in like manner, each time he exerts sufficient will power to refrain from a harmful act he gains strength to resist the next temptation. The general instruction should be re-enforced by an abundance of concrete examples, to show the child how he can apply the lesson in his own particular case.

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[31] Cf. May, "What Science Offers on Character Education," in: *Religious Education*, June, 1928.

Sound training in chastity is more a matter of psychology than of biology, and more a problem of emotional psychology than of knowledge. It is a problem that calls for education in all the springs of character. If habits are formed from three to fourteen, it behooves parents to begin early with habituating the children to what will form the basis of their character and therefore their protection when they are passing through the fire and water of the many temptations incident to the period of adolescence.

Beginning with the pre-School Child

Much can be done in this regard with the pre-school child. Dr. William H. Pyle reports in *American Childhood*[32] on the results of what has been observed in the children's clinic connected with the Detroit Teachers College. Dr. Pyle insists justly that life is a structure and is built, and that an adult is, at maturity, the sum of his habits, knowledge, and ideals. Every day in a child's early life his future is being formed and predetermined. Dr. Pyle deals with courtesy habits, good habits at table, and speech habits. While these habits have influence upon the character development needed as a basis for training in chastity, we find of more importance the other sets of habits enumerated; for instance, the health habits.

[32] Vol. XIV (1929), pp. 15-18 and 59-61.

Children should be trained in such habits as the washing of hands, the use of the tooth-brush, the proper use of the handkerchief, keeping fingers and objects away from the mouth, eyes, and nose as a hygienic measure, regular body elimination, regular meals, the importance of immediate attention to cuts and scratches. A child trained from his earliest years to keep his person clean will have a fear of being besmirched with any dirt, and may find herein a safeguard in any temptation to associate later with those who are vile and filthy of soul. In this way cleanliness may prove an aid to godliness.

Further aid will come to the character from the habits of orderliness. Orderliness can be taught by insisting upon the children's putting away their toys, their wraps, their clothes after dressing and undressing; keeping shelves, toy box, and clothes closet in order; not coming into the house with muddy feet, handling books properly; and learning to take responsibility in matters within their scope.

Pestalozzi realized the value of such training in orderliness for the development of character. In *Leonard and Gertrude*, he says of Arner's system of sex education:

> Arner's method of counteracting every species of sexual laxity—from coquetry to child murder—and of inculcating control of the animal passions, was to give a careful training in orderliness and thoughtfulness *before* the sex feelings had come into being. When the sex instinct came it found a house in perfect order and discipline, with a master capable of training the new inmate to behave in a manner corresponding to the character of the household, and able to put it in its proper place, should it show any signs of insubordination.

Play habits likewise offer opportunity for the formation of important character traits. The two main objects in the play habits are to overcome habits of selfishness and to inculcate a sense of fairness. The first is more difficult than the second, as very young children are not amenable to the idea of subordinating themselves to the interests of the group in play. Yet they can be shown that there is no fun in play unless all are fair.

General moral habits that can be formed early are: (1) truthfulness and honesty, the foundations of character; (2) respect for parents—and parents should earn this respect; (3) the point of view of co-operation which comes only with maturity, but which can be started early, especially if there are several children in the family; (4) a sense of responsibility, again developed more easily among several children; (5) sympathy, a development of years, can also be started early; (6) a sense of modesty, most important for proper training in chastity.

It may be surprising for some to discover how intimate is the connection between sex offenses and other bad habits. Miss Mary E. Spencer, in her study "Obstacles to Character Development,"[33] explains why contacts with sex knowledge or sex affairs, especially when the child is young, often lead to mental conflicts which find an outlet in habits of stealing: "This impulse to steal arises when the victim is beset with sex thoughts, or when he is in the presence of a person who has given him sex information or initiated him into sexual practices. To anyone who has not given time to a study of such cases, the relationship existing between conflicts over sex matters and the impulse to steal is difficult to believe.'' The first 200 pages of Dr. William Healy's *Mental Conflicts and Misconduct*[34] are given over to such cases of stealing as are attributed to mental conflicts over sex knowledge and early sex experiences. Mental conflict is at the bottom of many cases of dishonesty of this kind where there is no need for the material taken and no good use made of it after it has been procured. Miss Spencer explains that the act of stealing seems to provide an outlet for pent-up emotion and internal turmoil. Dr. Healy ranks sex experiences and mental conflicts third among conditions directly causative of delinquency.

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[33] *National Catholic Educational Association Bulletin.* Nov., 1929, p. 555.

Hence, all the more reason to forearm the child betimes by proper habit formation to withstand the later temptations of sex. All the habits mentioned above should be begun between the child's third and fourth birthdays, though some may be begun before, depending upon the child. However, it will be advisable to heed the advice of Dr. Pyle: ''Go slowly. Work on but one or two habits at a time. Do not vacillate. Do not be intermittent. Uncertainty and wavering will destroy all possibility of success. Anyone who would guide young children should be as sure and certain as fate and as regular as planetary motion.''

Much would be gained in our schools if our teachers would apply intelligently and consistently the principles of the spiritual life to the subject of habit formation. The researches conducted in this field by public school people merely confirm the principles laid down by the masters of the spiritual life. For instance, an article written by Mr. Stephen G. Rich, "A Constructive Program for Moral and Civic Habit-Formation," [35] insists that the most important laws in habit formation are: (1) allowing no exception; (2) attentive repetition; (3) satisfaction from doing the act.

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[34] Boston, 1917.

It is this third point that is often overlooked or at least misunderstood by many of our Catholic teachers. These teachers may have been led astray by educational theorists who hold the idea that unless a child has a favorable attitude to begin with, no habit formation is possible. These theorists would have us believe that if we force a child to do an act, we thereby destroy all chance of the child's ever securing a favorable attitude towards the act. It is this opinion that may have led many of our teachers to allow their pupils to follow the line of least resistance, and consequently the young people converted the schoolrooms into playrooms.

It is therefore well to have Mr. Rich restate the fact that for many pupils—possibly a large majority, certainly well towards a half of all pupils—the favorable attitude is entirely a product of the satisfaction resulting from the doing of the act, and only in rare cases or with peculiar pupils does the absence or presence of coercion in causing the first performance of the action have any appreciable effect upon the resulting satisfaction. Hence the prudent teacher will have no patience with the child who refuses to do the act because "he doesn't like to" or for some other irrelevant reason.

Those of our Catholic teachers who have a proper grasp of the principles of the spiritual life know that the aim of the school should always be learning rather than teaching, and experiences rather than indoctrination. Hence, while they make use of direct moral instruction, they should remember that the final result will depend more on environment, atmosphere, good example, inspiration, co-operation, and public expectation. It is facts like these that are being restated more and more frequently in our American literature on education.[36] If thoroughly grounded in the principles of the spiritual life and of Catholic philosophy, our teachers may learn a great deal from current educational literature, even if written by non-Catholics. It is gratifying to note in our Catholic educational literature an ever increasing tendency to stress the subject of character training methods. It is this literature that may let our religious teachers realize the need of adapting the principles of the spiritual life to the present-day needs of their pupils, who happen to be living in the world, and not in the convent or monastery. Much of our moral teaching remains ineffective because our teachers do not always adapt their instruction to the concrete needs of their pupils. It is not an easy matter to bring out the lesson that a saintly anchorite living in the desert has for the modern fifteen-year-old boy whose chief interests in life seem to be the school team and the corner movie house.

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[35] *Education*, Nov., 1924, pp. 129-141.

TEACHING SELF-CONTROL AND SELF-DENIAL

One of the most important habits to be formed in children is to train them to be moderate in their wants. There is here no thought of denying them joys and pleasures. No, childhood should be filled with joy. Joy is the child's birthright. Yet even the very young child should learn that no one can satisfy all his wishes, and that he must be habituated to moderate his wishes lest he grow miserable later in life over the fact that he cannot get everything the heart desires. It would be conducive to this end to have parents and teachers remember the equation: $H = \frac{P}{W}$. H stands for happiness; P, for what you possess; W, for what you want. The more you reduce your wants, the more certainly will you find happiness in what you possess.

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[36] Cf. John J. Loftus, "Character Training in School," in: *Journal of Educational Method*, March, 1929, pp. 314-318.

A boy who has had his every whim gratified while he was a child, will be habituated to yield to his every urge, and will not hesitate to ignore even moral considerations if they stand in the way of his satisfying some sensuous impulse. The other boy, however, who has been trained to abstain cheerfully from the cookies between meals, will be developing the basis of the habit that will assist him in saying "no" to the beautiful girl tempting him when he is twenty. He will learn how to find happiness in self-control and will therefore never imagine that he will be ill if he cannot satisfy his sex urge.

When we consider how alluring are the temptations of sex, we realize the urgent need of training the young in habits of self-control. There was good reason for Archbishop John L. Spalding to appeal to mothers: "O mothers, you whose love is the best any of us have known, harden your sons, and urge them on, not in the race for wealth, but in the steep and narrow path wherein, through self-conquest and self-knowledge, they rise towards God and all high things."

More necessary than initiating the children into the mysteries of sex is it to acquaint them with what Bishop Sailer calls "the strategy of the Holy War." Parents will do this if they train their children every now and then to deny themselves some favorite article of food, or to accomplish some heroic conquest of laziness, or to exercise themselves in ignoring pain. The children will thus get iron into their blood. They will be trained early to exercise themselves spiritually, that is, to practice asceticism, for asceticism means spiritual exercise. They will be laying foundations for the standard that stands eternally: the real test of character is not what we have, but what we are; and our real self is best tested not by what we want to *get*, but by what we can do without.

It has been observed that whatever makes a man struggle with himself strengthens him. One of the best results of such practical discipline is to create a kind of physical and nervous tradition of the supremacy of the spirit over the body and its weaknesses. John Stuart Mill, who certainly cannot be charged with any prejudice in favor of Christian asceticism, has very justly observed that those who have never been accustomed to deny themselves permissible indulgences cannot be relied upon to abstain from gratifying their non-permissible desires; he also expressed his belief that the day was coming when children and young people would be systematically trained in asceticism and taught, as they were in antiquity, to overcome their desires, to brave dangers and willingly to endure pain—and all this as a mere educational practice.

The Christian realizes that the poorest education that teaches self-control is better than the best that neglects it. Professor Foerster relates how, in his course of giving moral instruction to the young, he spoke with boys and girls of twelve on the question: "What opportunities are there in the school for employing your wills?" The children were full of suggestions and took a remarkable interest in the topic. It was a surprise and a revelation to them that it was possible to use the school tasks to increase their strength.

On such occasions Professor Foerster was always quite astonished to see how totally new it was to the children to look at the task of performing, for example, disagreeable school work from the point of view of will-gymnastics. The children were astounded to learn that precision, neatness, and self-activity with regard to a task would bring with it an increase of will power and endurance in every other sphere, and that carelessness in one thing would infect the performance of others. But, once the idea had been brought home to them, they soon realized that the new theory coincided with their own past experiences.

It is obvious to the Catholic teacher that the development of character should be considered the main objective of all educational activities. If the pupils come to recognize this objective themselves, they will find it a source of inspiration for much of the drudgery, the performance of which is at present enforced by merely outward discipline without any appeal to the inner life. From the point of view of training in chastity it is particularly unfortunate that discipline is often enforced by means which have a degrading effect upon the sense of honor—such as mere regimentation and harsh language—rather than by drawing out the best forces latent in the children's characters.

We realize that some of our teachers will have to change their practices if they would adopt this policy of training their pupils to acquire habits of self-control and self-denial. The tendency has been for some time and is still to smooth the road to remove all difficulties from the life of the pupil. Abbé Ernest Dimnet remarks sharply:[37] "Easy methods seem to be a dogma with Americanizers. Easy is the word one hears all the time in connection with the art of teaching." Making all things easy for the pupil will only soften him. "Not what I like, but what is right" should be given the child as a principle for life.

If a boy is taught to deny himself things that he likes to eat and drink, he will be training himself in moral independence. It is not difficult to arouse the enthusiasm of young people for such little acts of self-denial—or shall we call them, for the sake of the young idealists, "acts of heroism"? Let the recreational leader try, say, on a hike, to put a little will-gymnastics into practice by encouraging the boys to resist thirst and fatigue. He will be surprised at the interest which such acts of self-conquest will arouse. The failure of much educational work is caused to a great extent by the merely external character of the methods employed. The teacher should ally himself with the higher self of his pupil. Children are growing creatures, and instinctively resist all mere repression. Self-control should therefore be represented as an act of *growth*, of strength, of freedom; it must be made evident that the apparent repression is only a step towards a higher life and a more concentrated energy. Through the conflict of the higher self with the bodily desires, a man's higher self attains freedom—otherwise it remains captive. These suggestions are merely first steps. The teacher must proceed to what Professor Foerster calls "the science of self-control"; he must show how will-power is built up by a gradual process of practice on the smallest things, and how every act of self-conquest in one sphere of life makes the battle easier in all the other spheres.[38]

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[37] *The Art of Thinking*, New York, 1929, p. 64.

Represent to the boys this struggle for self-conquest, and their hearts will glow with enthusiasm. It is offering them temptations to right-doing. It is sport of the highest order that will appeal to them. They will discover that aggressive fighting for the right is the noblest sport that the world affords. In the war for the control of our emotional nature, the offensive is the best defense of the higher nature. To take the offensive is the best defense—that is the simple principle underlying the work of self-discipline. He who passively waits for the temptations to come from his lower nature is sure to fall. The sensuous nature should, from the very beginning, be severely disciplined and trained to obedience. To encourage the voluntary practice of self-conquest before the age of puberty is the most practical and thorough-going training in chastity.

By training our young people along these lines, we shall make them truly free. We shall give them a conception of that true liberty which is the enjoyment of our privileges without trespassing on the rights of one's soul, of our neighbors, or of God. Obedience to law is liberty. "All creative liberty," says Mr. Chesterton, "is the liberty to limit ourselves." We must train the young people to obey, not their impulse, but the principle. The instincts are there before we begin our training, and will remain after the young people leave our hands. Our instruction cannot change the instinct, for instinct exists prior to experience and independent of instruction.

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[38] *Marriage and the Sex Problem,* New York, 1913, pp. 175-176.

Through such training in chastity we shall be doing our part to preserve the civilization of the race. It is not possible to develop or to maintain what we call civilization unless we can inhibit primitive passions or divert them into constructive channels. The history of the world evidences that the races who have not done this have remained primitive or barbaric. Whatever they had of energy, physical and mental, they expended on a low circuit, mainly on the plane of passionate indulgence. If man would rise above this plane, he must divert the energy that flows through low circuits into higher emotional, intellectual, social, aesthetic, ethical, and religious circuits. It is a truism to say that the larger the proportion of elemental energy that can be shunted through higher circuits, the higher the civilization attained by the race and the higher the degree of culture attained by the individual.[39]

We can never be certain of will power unless the will has been tested. The virtue which has not been tested is not a virtue—it is only a hypothesis. If a man has never been tempted, he should not be too sure of his honesty. Temptations are a file which rubs

[39] Cf. Junius Vincent, *Ruth Talks It Over.* New York, 1925. p. 61.

off much of the rust of our self-confidence. This life is meant for discipline, not for selfish enjoyment. There may be those who think the young too weak to practice self-denial and self-control. They may wish to wait until the young are more mature. These people are carrying too for the slogan "Safety first." The man or the community that is primarily concerned to escape danger and difficulty is doomed to dry rot. We must seize opportunities for strengthening the will. It is for want of a strong will, in these days of nervous rush and excitement, that so many people break down morally and physically.

Education of Both Head and Heart

We trust we have made it plain throughout our book that the need of the hour is complete education, not mere sex instruction. Education means development of the will, feeling, thought, the formation of habits and of character; instruction is only one of the means of education, and has for its object knowledge. Young people need education of the whole man, not education merely from the ears up. The sole reliance on knowledge is a Socratic fallacy. Knowledge without prayer and the Sacraments and the grace of God will be in vain. There can be no doubt that Solomon knew all these things better than most people, yet the knowledge did not do him much good. Above all and before all, we must emphasize the supernatural aspect. Knowledge alone is a corpse, and, as it takes a soul to move a body, so it takes the grace of God to make our instruction effective.

Still, human sexual control must be on the basis of intelligent choice, because there is no basis for instinctive control as in the animals. This means one of the most trying tasks of human life, for there must be voluntary control of instinctive impulses or sexual desires which are intensified by numerous temptations that set up exclusively human problems. Since human beings are by nature left to control their most powerful appetite solely by intelligent choice in accordance with the law of God, it is evident that a policy based on silence, ignorance, and mystery must fail. To gain control of sexual emotions we must know (*a*) the reasons why control in accordance with God's law is best for the individual and the race, and (*b*) the ways and means of control of sexual conduct.

It is neither a natural nor a Christian view that mere sex instruction would be sufficient. Again, it is an untenable view that will power and so-called innocence, a euphemistic name for ignorance, would long survive under modern living conditions. Hence we have contended all along that training of the will must come first, to be followed by the necessary instruction adapted to individual needs.[40] To have a completely formed man, we must educate both his head and his heart. It is just as necessary to have a heart in life as it is to have a head. Again, all the knowledge in the world will avail little if the heart is shriveled. We have too many intellectual geniuses who are moral morons.

What Cardinal Newman wrote some seventy years ago still remains one of the best statements of the inadequacy of mere knowledge as an influence upon human conduct:

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[40] Cf. Gillet-Ross, *Innocence and Ignorance,* New York, 1917, pp. xx-xxiv

> Philosophy, however enlightened, however profound, gives no command over the passions, no influential motives, no vivifying principles. Liberal education makes not the Christian, not the Catholic, but the gentleman. It is well to be a gentleman, it is well to have a cultivated intellect, a delicate taste, a candid, equitable, dispassionate mind, a noble and courteous bearing in the conduct of life;—these are the connatural qualities of a large knowledge; they are the objects of a university; I am advocating, I shall illustrate and insist upon them; but still, I repeat, they are no guarantee for sanctity or even for conscientiousness, they may attach to the man of the world, to the profligate, to the heartless—pleasant, alas, and attractive as he shows when decked out in them. Taken by themselves they do but seem to be what they are not; they look like virtues at a distance, but they are detected by close observers, and on the long run; and hence it is that they are popularly accused of pretence and hypocrisy, not, I repeat, from their own fault, but because their professors and their admirers persist in taking them for what they are not, and are officious in arrogating for them a praise to which they have no claim. Quarry the granite rock with razors, or moor the vessel with a thread of silk; then may you hope with such keen and delicate instruments as human knowledge and human reason to contend against those giants, the passion and the pride of man.[41]

Yes, knowledge alone is inadequate to control the passions. How true in the sphere of sex-control what Herbert Spencer says about the influence of knowledge upon human conduct: "Mere culture of the intellect (and education as usually conducted amounts to little more) is hardly at all operative upon conduct." What Shakespeare says of the power of passion in the young is almost as true of the power of passion in those who are old: "The brain may devise laws for the blood; but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree; such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel, the cripple."[42] Intellectual initiation into the mysteries of sex, in large or small doses, is by itself insufficient, and the scientific initiation which does not itself call for a strong moral education, will be not only insufficient, but dangerous.

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[41] *The Idea of a University*, London, 1925, p. 121.

Yet they tell us that knowledge is power. We do not deny this, but knowledge is not the beginning and the end of character formation, for to maintain this would be to subscribe, as the Rev. Dr. George Johnson observes, "to the ideo-motor theory of ideas and to deny, at least implicitly, the distinction between the intellect and the will. Everyday experience reveals us knowing better than we are doing. We must know the only true God and Jesus Christ Whom He has sent, but we must also love Him and keep His Commandments. It is not enough to have the light, we must walk in it."[43]

CHASTITY—THE TOUCHSTONE OF COMPLETE CHARACTER EDUCATION

We have never denied that there must be sex instruction. But it is our contention that direct sex instruction is of secondary importance, whereas many modern educationists would assign to it first place. The best possible training in chastity is that which says merely what is absolutely necessary with regard to sex and concentrates upon strengthening all those habits and elements of character which will naturally prepare boys and girls to take up a right attitude towards the awakening impulses. We agree with Professor Foerster[44] that the educator in matters relating to sex should not be a specialist; he should be as universal as possible in his outlook, and should be capable of developing an educational system every portion of which is adapted to deepening and strengthening the whole character so as to protect it against the temptations of the flesh. Consequently the best training in chastity is a thorough all-round education in the best sense of the term. What a convincing argument for the need of complete Catholic character education! The behavior of any young person in the sphere of sex is the resultant of his or her education as a whole:

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[42] *Merchant of Venice*, Act II, Sc. 2.

[43] *Catholic Educational Review*, Nov., 1927, p. 563.

> If the education has been merely intellectual, or has been soft or superficial, then the boy or girl, in spite of the best possible instruction, will fall a victim to the first temptation. On the other hand, if the whole education has been such as to strengthen the spiritual and moral nature against what is sensual and degrading, then he or she will know what is impure, even in the absence of any sexual instruction, just as Parsifal, on first coming into contact with Kundry, saw in a flash the whole of what lay behind her enticements. The sexual behavior of a given individual is a very good touchstone by which to judge of his whole education, for it enables us to perceive whether or not his training has been based upon a true knowledge of human nature and a disciplining of its weaknesses. Considered from this viewpoint, the sexual laxity of the young people of to-day throws a lurid light upon the character of our education. The higher energies

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[44] *Marriage and the Sex Problem*, New York, 1913, pp. 171-172.

> of youth have been so exclusively devoted to the accumulation of knowledge that no strength remains for self-discipline.

True, the doctor was right when he declared that chastity is a fluoroscope with which we can see the spirit through the body. And what a convincing argument has the non-Catholic writer adduced for the need of a complete Catholic character education—the education that furnishes not only the required knowledge and the power of will but also the means of grace needed for the conquest of the spirit over the body!

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The following is a list of all works that have proved helpful in preparing the present study. The mention of a work does not imply that the publication is recommended for general reading. In fact, some of the books listed are based on false principles. Yet they are included in the list because they assisted the writer in studying the subject of sex education and may therefore prove helpful to Catholic research workers generally in examining the very complex problem. The works marked with a double asterisk will prove helpful to priests. Those marked with a single asterisk are recommended to parents, and those marked with a dagger are recommended to teachers.

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